

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 26th May 2022

PRESENT

C Leadbetter Esq (Chairman)	S Johnson Esq
D R A Fabb Esq	J German Esq
I Johnson Esq	T E A Noble Esq
L C A Munns	D W England Esq
D J Edwards	J M Short Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) & Mr R Wilmer (District Officer) was in attendance.

D W Cornwell Esq & M P England Esq joined the meeting remotely via telephone.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from J C Armstrong Esq, Cllr I Benney, D D Brown Esq, S Edgley Esq, M E Heading Esq, G Munns Esq, R Waters Esq, H W Whittome Esq and S W Whittome Esq.

B.1796 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 item 13 on the agenda – Lafarge Restoration/Pumping Agreement.

B.1797 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 2nd December 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1798 Election of Board Members

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

B.1799 Death of Mr Terry Kent

Miss McShane reported that Mr Terry Kent, who was a long serving employee of the Board, had died at the end of February this year. A letter of condolence had been sent to Mrs Kent.

B.1800 Rental Agreement, Puddock Pumping Station Bungalow

Miss McShane reminded the Board that Mr & Mrs Kent had resided at the Puddock Pumping Station bungalow since Mr Kent's retirement. As Mr Kent had no longer been an employee of the Board, they had occupied the property on a shorthold tenancy in Mr Kent's name. With the Chairman's agreement, Mrs Kent had been given a shorthold tenancy for 6 months. This is a temporary arrangement until she can obtain alternative accommodation as the Board may need the bungalow for operational purposes for the new District Officer when Mr Wilmer retires.

RESOLVED

The Board approved the actions of the Chairman in granting Mr Kent's widow a shorthold tenancy of 6 months from 17th March 2022.

B.1801 Standing Orders

Further to Minute B.1777, Miss McShane advised the Board about the procedure for reducing the numbers of Members on the Board from 21 to the suggested 14/15 elected Members. In addition, the Board also had one appointed Member from Fenland District Council. She advised that an application to reduce numbers could, depending on the work load currently being undertaken by Defra, be quite a long and protracted process.

The Board expressed the view that their real concern was not so much the number of Members on the Board, but the quorum required by the Board to make decisions and asked the Clerk to investigate with Defra whether it was possible to just reduce the quorum to about 7 members as it was proving difficult to get quorum of 12 Members to every meeting of the Board, due to the reduction in the number of farms in the area and some of the older Members retiring from farming.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk contact Defra about the Board's wish to amend their standing orders to require a quorum of 7 Members rather than carry out a formal reconstitution of the Board.

B.1802 Fenton Lode New Cut (Tesco Site)

Further to minute B.1781, Miss McShane advised that the Consulting Engineer, in his report, was suggesting that subject to the availability of the relevant parties, a detailed inspection of the diverted drain should be undertaken to ensure that any slippage in the banks, slip stabling and any other issues are dealt with before the Agreement co-performance Deed terminates in 2023.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer arrange a site meeting to be attended by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and District Officer.

B.1803 Outstanding Drainage Rates

Further to minute B.1782, Miss McShane reported significant work had been done to bring the Boards Rating area plans up to date. It was hoped to get this finalised soon and to take any actions needed to identify any land that remained unallocated to a ratepayer and then to seek to identify occupation.

RESOLVED

That the current position be noted.

B.1804 Access Requirements, Fenton Lode New Cut

Further to minute B.1785 (ii) & (iii), The District Officer reported that a fence had been erected between the Tesco site and Honeysome Road and that access was required here for maintenance purposes.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer, Solicitor and District Officer arrange a site visit to view the access arrangements at this location.

B.1805 Over Hanging Trees – Stainless Metalcraft

Further to minute B.1795, The District Officer reported that the trees had now been removed and no further action was required.

B.1806 Lafarge Restoration/Pumping Agreement

The Chairman reported that a meeting had been arranged with the Consulting Engineer and the specification for construction had been discussed.

B.1807 Review of Easement Agreements – (A Bartlett & Sons Ltd)

The Chairman reported that this was no longer in agricultural use and therefore any spoil from maintenance works would need to be removed from the site.

The Chairman agreed to discuss the continued use of the nine-metre easement strip with Toby Barlett.

B.1808 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss McShane reported that Huntingdonshire District Council had written to advise that due to the new administrative arrangements at the Council following the elections in May, there had been some delay with the appointments to outside bodies and that new cabinet were to meet to review the appointments on 16th July 2022 and will advise the Board of the appointed Members after that date. The previous appointed Members, Councillors Bill and Haines did not stand for re-election in May.

B.1809 Finance Committee

The minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 11th May 2022, were noted and approved.

B.1810 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Further to minute B.1749, the Board considered the charges for hiring of plant for private work and the recommendations of the Finance Committee. (last reviewed – June 2021).

RESOLVED

That the charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work for the year 2022-2023 are:-

(i) Doosan DX 140W Excavator

Increase to - £60 per hour in the District) (inclusive of operator's wages)
£65 per hour outside the District)

(ii) Flail Mower

Increase to - £65 per hour inside the District) (inclusive of operator's wages)
£70 per hour outside the District)

B.1811 Clerk's Report

The Clerk 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 Tombleson (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) 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 River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held on Tuesday the 1st March 2022.

This was the first face to face meeting held since the COVID-19 outbreak but the format was restricted to the AGM only. It is planned however to reintroduce the popular and useful morning workshops for 2023.

Marc Heading was reappointed as chair with Councillor Doug McMurdo as vice chair. Topics covered included unsurprisingly red diesel, and water resources/the work of WRE.

Sofi Lloyd announced that Brian Stewart and Ian Hodge from the EA had recently joined the ADA Board and that DEFRA had asked ADA to liaise with them on the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act. She was also pleased to be able to report that ADA had been instrumental in initiating an all-party parliamentary group with a remit to discuss and consider Sustainable Flood and Drainage Management.

Phil Hulme and Amanda Macloughlan spoke on behalf of the EA covering the challenging associated with significant staff changes at the EA and noted that with the capital program for this six-year cycle being double that of the previous one this would be generating considerable additional work load.

It was advised that this coming years revenue (maintenance) budget was £5.3M which was more than the previous year but what could be delivered within this budget could be impacted by inflation.

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 7th March 2023.

iv) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2022

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2022 will be held at ExCel, London on the 23rd and 24th November 2022.

v) Land Registry

That whilst it 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.

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

Two changes are proposed. The current arrangements and the proposed changes are outlined below.

1. The current arrangements for charging for Technical Services advice and support, for planning and consenting matters, is based upon a direct cost recovery arrangement. To achieve this all time spent on every item of work undertaken has to be logged and recorded in detail. This information is then pulled together and invoices prepared and checked before being passed to the Board Chairs for sign-off. This requires a considerable amount of time and effort and this time is of course included in the eventual fees paid. It is considered that a more efficient model would be to mirror the one used for charging for Clerking services which is based upon a lump sum annual fee. This has a number of advantages. It reduces internal workload which in turn releases time to carry out productive work. It also allows Boards to budget for the fees knowing at the time of rate setting what the annual fees will be.

To ensure that a fair assessment is made it is suggested that the last five years of fees are looked at and an average taken. If there is clearly one or two years where one or two planning matters have impacted heavily upon the figures then an appropriate adjustment will be made. The final fee will be converted into a fraction of the costs of overall cost of supplying

planning and consenting services for all Boards including the MLC and this percentage will become fixed until such time that a review is called for.

In addition, we will still actively encourage developers and their agents to enter into Pre/Post application contracts. This will help keep the overall planning costs to a minimum. We will also be looking to move more and more to lump sum charges for developers for the same reasons outlined above, ie to reduce internal administration work and costs where possible.

It is not proposed that this change will extend to other Technical Services work, such as surveys, catchment analysis, and refurbishment/replacement/improvement scheme work or associated advice which will continue to be logged and charged on a “hours spent” basis.

2. Many members have noted that the reporting in relation to planning application comments and responses is comprehensive. Again, it often takes many hours to produce such detailed reports for which the Board is charged. This time could be spent in dealing with and taking action on planning and consenting matters. There is also the issue of the potential time lapse between any planning/byelaw issue raising its head and the meeting of the Board. It is of course normally advantageous to take action as soon as possible after any issue had become apparent. It is therefore proposed that going forward the Board nominate who they wish to be copied in on all planning correspondence, for example the Chair and Vice-Chair. They will then be able to liaise with the Planning Engineer if they wish to and will be conversant with discussions being undertaken. The Board may also wish to delegate decision making for initial actions for bylaw infringements to the Board nominee/s.

To ensure that the Board is consulted on the most important matters it is proposed that when it is wished for a matter to be raised within the Board report then a request from the Chair can be made and a detailed report would follow. This would normally be the case where significant costs might be associated with enforcement, including perhaps incurring legal fees or where an unusually large or significant development is proposed.

Should the above change be agreed to, then going forward the Engineer’s report will provide a list of all planning applications of interest to the Board and consents applied for/approved but unless requested by the Chair no detail will be provided.

RESOLVED

- 1) That a lump sum fee arrangement be agreed in principle, and figures presented to the Board at their January 2023 meeting.
- 2) Chairman, Vice-Chairman and David England to be copied into correspondence on relevant Planning Applications.

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.

x) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

The Clerk reported that an order has been placed for telemetry to be installed at all six of the Board's pumping stations and that the installation will proceed over the summer months.

B.1812 Consulting Engineer's Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

Acre Fen

The Chairman reported that he was to arrange a site visit to the Pumping Station with Dave Bantoft, the Electrical Engineer.

High Fen

The new control panel and weedscreen cleaner was working well. The weedscreen cleaner is due its first service which is required to keep the warranty valid.

The cost of the service is £1,350 and Members approved an order to be placed for these works to be carried out. The Chairman agreed to discuss the warranty with the Electrical Engineer.

It was noted by Members of the Board that pump 2 was installed in 1989 and last overhauled in 2009 and consideration should be given to replacing it.

Puddock

It was noted that pump 2 continues to operate with the moisture ingress sensor unit defeated, however a recent test of the motor windings showed no further deterioration of its insulation resistance.

Both pumps at this station were manufactured in 1992 but are operating well.

Planning Applications

The Members noted the Planning Applications received and where appropriate had been dealt with by the Planning Engineer since the date of the last meeting.

Development of Womb Farm to the South West of Doddington Road, Chatteris

The Consulting Engineer advised that an approach had been received from Persimmon Homes East Midlands concerning this development which is beside Fenton Lode/Fillenham Drain (Dents Diversion).

The site is within both the Boards area and that of Nightlayers IDB and it was noted that during previous discussions it had been agreed that surface water should be directed to the Boards Fillenham drain whilst the treated foul effluent water should discharge in to the Boards systems via AWSL's Nightlayer's Fens WRC.

The Boards approved the actions of the Planning Engineer to date and asked for the Planning Engineer to arrange a site visit with Persimmon Homes.

New Advanced Engineering Training Centre at Chatteris Engineering works off Honeysome Road Chatteris – Stainless Metalcraft (Chatteris) Ltd

The District Officer reported that the encroachment issues had now been resolved.

Residential Development on Land to the West of Richmond Lodge, Fen Road, Pidley.

The Engineer reported that the information requested about the capacity of the balancing pond had not been received.

Pudduck Pumping Station

The Engineer reported that following the sale of the former Pumping Station, proposals had been submitted to modify the building into 2 residential properties. The Board had been approached to consider the disposal of surface water and treated effluent from the properties into the Boards watercourse. This will require laying two discharge pipes across the Board's land between the concrete road and conifers at the rear of the site, cutting a hole through the inlet headwall and discharging into the Board's watercourse.

RESOLVED

- i) High Fen - That the weedscreen cleaner is serviced at a cost of £1,350.00.
- ii) Puddock - That the pumps should not be replaced at the present time.
- iii) Puddock Pumping Station - That the Board was agreeable to this request subject to the appropriate conditions being negotiated including the removal of conifers and erection of a fence by the developer, a 6-metre gate to be provided between the pumping station and drain. A sum in the region of £20,000 to be negotiated for the cost the easement together with payment of the Board's legal costs. The Engineer to investigate if a water connection can be made to Puddock Pumping Station to help provide a resolution to the water pressure problems with Anglian Water.

B.1813 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.1814 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reported that a culvert was to be installed near point 14. He advised that he had 200 piles remaining and these would be installed at Fenton Lode near the Forty Foot River and that he would carry out these works.

He reported that at Hawk Fen there were obstructions in the 9-metre strip, mostly trees that needed to be removed and a letter had been sent to Kevin Richardson at Sewoods Farm, Chatteris.

The boards at High Fen were rotten and the District Officer asked if the Middle Level Engineer could provide an estimate for the cost of replacement.

The roadway to Pidley Acre Fen and West Moor needs attention and the District Officer asked if the Middle Level Engineers could inspect and provide an estimate for these works.

The District Officer requested if Planning could be obtained from Cambridgeshire County Council for the Pidley Pumping Station.

B.1815 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss McShane referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.1816 Clerk's fee

Consideration was given to the fee of the Clerk.

RESOLVED

That the proposed rate for 2022/2023 be approved.

B.1817 State-aided Schemes

Consideration was given to the desirability of undertaking further State-aided Schemes in the District and whether any future proposals should be included in the capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time but that this remains under review.

B.1818 District Labour - District Officer's Salary

The Board considered the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the salary of the District Officer be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award, as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

RESOLVED

That the recommendation of the Finance Committee be adopted.

B.1819 Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk reported that at the Environment Agency Flood Defence Committee meeting the Committee voted to adopt an indicative 2% increase in the precepts on Internal Drainage Boards for the next 6 years commencing from 2022/23, with the ability to revisit annually should exceptional circumstances indicate this is required. The Committee voted for a 0% increase (for exceptional circumstances) above the indicative 2% increase for the year ending 31st March 2023 - total of a 2% increase on the level of precept on Internal Drainage Boards for the year ending 31st March 2023.

The precept for 2020/2021 was £21,877.00.

B.1820 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £8,132.60 (£18,900.12 less £10,767.52 received on account) (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency for the financial year 2020/2021 based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for that financial year and the sum of £11,822.17 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2021/2022.

B.1821 Determination of annual value(s) for rate 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.

B.1822 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1788, the Chairman reported that he would arrange the next meeting with Cope Safety Management and the report would be reported at the next meeting of the Board in December.

B.1823 Review of Internal Controls and appointment of Internal Auditor

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

The Clerk advised that due COVID-19 challenges the current Internal Auditor, Whiting & Partners, had been approached and asked and had agreed to extend their contract beyond the originally agreed three-year term (under the original contractual terms). It was also noted that going forward auditors be invited to tender for a five-year term, the principle being that this gave both parties certainty over a longer period. For the Boards this meant that the investment in time in getting a new auditor up to speed represented better value.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve a further one-year extension of the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor and to support the proposal for a five-year contract to be tendered thereafter.

B.1824 Risk Management Assessment

- a) Members considered and approved the Board's Risk Register.

b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings and gave consideration to having a professional valuation of the Board's real estate assets, for insurance purposes.

RESOLVED

That no changes be made to the valuation at this time and for the matter to be reviewed again at the next annual meeting.

B.1825 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.1826 Annual Governance Statement – 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 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.1827 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £309,563.31 which had been made during the financial year 2021/2022.

(NB) – Mr German declared an interest in the payments made to K R German and Sons.

B.1828 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation 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.1829 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2022/2023

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2022/2023 and were informed by the Clerk 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 89.15% and 10.85%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £182,759 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 £162,938 and £19,821 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 22.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £14,778 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £5,043 be made and issued to Fenland 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 levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.1830 Date of next Meeting

The Clerk reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Board would be held on Thursday 1st December 2022 at Lakeside Lodge, Pidley which would include an inspection of the District commencing at 9.30am.

B.1831 Any Other Business

- i) The Board approved the payment of the ADA subscription.
- ii) During the meeting, the District Officer had confirmed that it was his intention to retire in April 2023 and his son had put his name forward to be considered as his replacement.

The Chairman reported that he had agreed to meet and interview Richard Wilmer on 27th May and the Board delegated a decision on any appointment to the Chairman, subject to consultation with other board Members, if necessary.

The appointment to be made on the same salary as the existing District Officer with a review after 6 months.

This arrangement would enable Richard Wilmer to be trained up before the District Officer retired. The Chairman advised that, if required, the District Officer was willing to work for the Board on a temporary basis over the winter period or as required.

The Chairman advised at the current time the Pudduck Pumping Station Bungalow was not available and not required, but if this position changed, notice would need to be served on the current tenants. It was noted by the Board that refurbishment works may be needed to the bungalow.