



1. Governance

1.1 Election of Chairman

1.2 Apologies for Absence

1.3 Declaration of Interest

Board Members are advised to declare a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest on any item in the Agenda.

1.4 Minutes of the Meeting held 15 June 2021

Present

Mr Michael Dougherty (Chairman)	MD
Mr John Barker (Vice Chairman)	JB
Mr Douglas McTaggart	DMT
Mr Martin Belton	MB
Mr John Oldridge	JO

In attendance on behalf of JBA Consulting, Clerk, Engineer and Environmental Adviser:

Mr Craig Benson	CB
Mr Paul Jones	PJ
Mr Mark Joynes	MJ

Apologies for Absence

2021.21 An apology was received from Cllr Liz Sargeantson.

Declaration of Interest

2021.22 There were none.

Minutes of the Meeting held 9 Feb 2021

2021.23 Minutes of the last meeting were circulated with the meeting papers. The minutes were taken as read. **MB proposed and DMT seconded the Minutes be approved for signature by the Chairman, all in agreement.**

Matters Arising

2021.24 There were none.

Matters Arising Not Discussed Elsewhere

2021.25 There were none.

CEO's Report

The Clerk's report was read and approved.

MB



Matters Arising

2021.26 Standing Orders: CB informed the Board that DEFRA have slightly changed the wording of the draft Standing Orders to allow virtual meetings indefinitely for Drainage Boards. CB asked the Board to approve the draft standing orders included in the appendices of the meeting papers. DMT proposed they be approved, and JO seconded.

2021.27 Red Diesel: CB informed the Board the government will not be extending the exemptions allowed to the agricultural sector to Internal Drainage Boards. As part of the flood defence sector, IDBs will not qualify. Drainage Boards and their contractors must use white diesel from 1 April 2022. ADA has issued a questionnaire asking IDBs to quantify their usage, which had been completed on behalf of the Shire Group. He also informed members ADA had requested the 4-year exemption permitted to the agricultural sector be extended to IDBs and were lobbying for change. MB asked about Natural England. JB asked if red diesel could be used to prevent flooding. CB said no, that is why ADA were lobbying. The consensus among the members was the situation was ludicrous and that they had not previously heard of the coming restrictions.

CB discussed the impact of this decision. Options included the possibility of maintenance works being carried out directly by landowners, that would reduce the Board's annual budget. MB said this was part of a wider transition to white diesel. CB said it might be possible for an exemption to be awarded before November 2021. PJ observed the Board could always serve notice on landowners, and the situation is tied to the Finance Bill, which is not yet enacted but the deadline is April 2022. JB asked when the decision was made. CB said in April / May time, with certain exemptions such as construction. DMT said the fuel duty could be claimed back if white diesel is used. PJ said exemption would only last 4 years, so arrangements would have to be made at some point.

CB suggested an additional meeting may be necessary around November 2021 and asked what the implications would be if a contractor were caught with red diesel when operating on behalf of the Board. MB asked who would police the use of red diesel. PJ said works often take place in remote areas. PJ also made the case that drainage board activities were tied to agriculture and the best case would be an exemption for the Board.

Finance Report

The Financial report, copies of which had been circulated with the meeting papers, was considered and adopted by Members.

Matters Arising

2021.28 Rating: The finance officer informed the Board all drainage rates and special levies for the year ended 31 March 2021 had been received. He also reported that 86.1% of the rates for the present year had been collected, along with the first instalment of the special levy.

2021.29 Internal Audit: The finance office also gave a brief summary of the internal audit report, copies of which had been distributed to members before the meeting. No major issues were reported.

2021.30 External Audit: Members noted that external audit for the year ended 31 March 2021 would shortly be underway and would take place within the required timescales.

2021.31 External Audit – Annual Governance Statement: Members were asked to consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement contained within Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return. MB proposed, JB seconded and members approved the statement.

2021.32 Budget Comparison: Members noted the information.

MAH



2021.33 Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2021: Members reviewed the Accounts that were circulated with the meeting papers and they agreed to approve the accounts as presented, noting the increased expenditure on general maintenance, additional pumping in the district and pumping station refurbishment costs. There was little variance from budget, and the only significant change from the previous year was the additional expenditure relating to Cross Drain Pumping Station. MD asked about costs associated with electricity procurement. The finance officer said this was due to the high volume of pumping that had taken place over recent years, and that membership of the Woldmarsh group allowed for significant savings.

Members also noted the lower than usual reserves at the year-end, owing to the above-mentioned works. The finance officer informed members that the Internal Auditor had described the reserves as 'adequate', and he expected the Board's reserves to recover in line with the five-year budget comparison included in the papers. MD expressed concern about the low reserves at the year end and asked how future works may be financed. The finance officer confirmed that borrowing through Public Works Loan Board may be an option, as the Board have no assets to sell or rent and little money to invest.

JB asked about the wayleaves payable to Reedness & Swinefleet Drainage Board and to Dempster IDB. CB said the former was based on the capacity into Warping Drain, and that the fee had stood at £600.00 for around twenty years, and the Dempster wayleave is based on annual values, and increases as their penny rate increases. JB asked what was discharged and it was established that there were at least two outlets in the Dempster Board's district.

JB proposed the Board approve the accounts, DMT seconded and the accounts were approved.

2021.34 External Audit – Accounting Statements: Members were asked to consider and approve the Accounting Statements contained within Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, which were a summary of the accounting statements previously approved. JB proposed, DMT seconded, and members approved the statement.

2021.35 Five Year Budget Estimate: The Board reviewed the five-year budget estimates and the levels of income & expenditure over that period.

2021.36 Financial Position: CB discussed the Board's financial position at the year end. He also discussed the Environmental Bill and its progress through parliament. In particular, the possible recalculation of Annual Values used to levy the rates of domestic and non-domestic properties and the impact this could have on the Board's finances.

2021.37 Pump Replacement: CB affirmed that should a further pump failure occur in the year, borrowing from PWLB would be the most likely solution to fund a replacement pump. He added that it was possible to raise further drainage rates in the same year via the LDA 1991. JB added that another funding option was to significantly increase the rate in future years. CB said the refurbishment works that have already been completed on the pump would extend the life of the pump and MD described the condition of the pumps as 'good as new'. PJ discussed the possibility of purchasing further pumps from Selby Area IDB as a number of sites were being refurbished and any pumps suitable would be identified.

2021.38 Schedule of Payments: The Board approved for signature by the Chairman a schedule of payments made since the last meeting totalling £10,062.09, of which £2,118.64 were paid by direct debit or approved by the Officers only. DMT proposed the Board approve the schedule and JO seconded.

Engineer's Report

The Engineer's report was read and approved.

MTB



Matters Arising

2021.39 Cross Drain Pumping Station: PJ said officers had compiled responses accompanying the meeting papers on modelling options and queries on the District which was hoped provided a useful for all Members.

2021.40 Natural England Level Survey: PJ said he would distribute the information as soon as he heard anything MD said officers were due on site tomorrow. MB asked if the monitors could be relied upon, given the recent dry weather. JB said the equipment had been in place for 12-18. PJ said he hoped they could find some relationship. In the short-term they would seek to reduce the times the monitors operate. PJ reported that until they have the results of the hydrological assessment, NE will try to keep the levels low on the moors.

2021.41 Associated British Ports: PJ said he had raised the issue of seeping and leakages. MD said the big door had two boards open and can only be inspected in a boat. However, he also said ABP had not been as the reeds were too high. PJ said he had made repeated attempts to contact the officers but had received no response. He said it was important to build on relationships and to get a reliable point of contact.

2021.42 Hydraulic Modelling: PJ informed the Board the cost for the model would be £3,675. One option would be to test the raising of the land and also to consider a pump on Shipcote Drain. The suggested ceiling budget would be £4,500. JB asked PJ to clarify what was meant by the raising of the land. PJ explained it meant raising land at the lowest points, unless it caused injury elsewhere. DMT asked if the land would be raised, or just the banks. PJ said the land as it the Board may be impacted by under-drainage, but only of course within the model. DMT asked if the Board would receive a model for all cases in return for the sum. DMT said if the Board don't spend, they could be in the same situation with no plan for the way forward. The base model already exists. The next challenge to be overcome is funding. CB pointed out that should the Board spend £3.5k – £4.5k, the reserves after 5 years would still be around £24,000. However, there would still be implementation costs. CB also said the balance at the end of 2021/22 would be around £16,000 should an otherwise normal year be experienced. DMT said he was in favour of the model, MB proposed and JB seconded.

Environmental Report

The Environmental Report circulated with the Meeting Papers was read and approved.

Health & Safety Report

The report which was circulated to members was read and noted by members.

Any Other Business

2021.43 Chairmanship: MD informed the Board he planned to step down as chairman, although it was his intention to remain as a member. He said after 21 years it was unfair that he remained as chair, with his land at the highest part of the catchment. JB pointed out that it was hardly possible to alter the lie of the land. CB thanked the Chairman for his role on the Board. MD thanked the Board and officers for their words of support. JB asked if MB would be prepared to take on the chairmanship. MB said he would be happy to take on the role and asked if MD would 'show him the ropes' over the coming months. It was agreed MD would remain as Chairman until the next meeting when a new Chair would be appointed.

Date of next meeting

2021.44 The meeting was closed at approximately 3:30pm. The next main meeting will take place on Tuesday, 11 January 2022, 2:00pm, with the venue to be determined. An additional extraordinary meeting may also be arranged in the interim.

MD