

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Board held on Tuesday 17th May 2022 at 7 pm at the Old Nene Golf and Country Club, Muchwood Lane, Ramsey, Hutingdon, Cambs.

PRESENT: Mr PH Wagstaffe (Chairman)(PW), Mr Dale Abblitt (Vice Chairman)(DA), Mr AH Wagstaffe (AW), Mr Rupert Waters (RW), Mr Lloyd Smith (LS), Mr DR Smith (DR) and Mr JAR Chrisp (Clerk to the Board)(JC).

#### AGM 22.1

APOLOGIES were received from Keith Abblitt and Councillor John Palmer who had just ceased to be a district councillor and for this reason did not feel he should attend as a representative of the Council. Thanks were recorded for his very helpful and useful service to the Board.

#### AGM 22.2

##### DECLARATIONS of INTEREST

DA declared an interest in that he had been engaged by the Board to carry out paid improvement work to the Stocking Fen Pumping Station.

#### AGM 22.3

##### ADOPTION of new FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Draft to be provided by the Clerk so as to amend the current regulations to provide for internet banking and the engagement of Middle Level Commissioners as contractors to manage the Board's finances.

#### AGM 22.4

##### APPROVAL of MINUTES

Having been duly proposed, seconded and agreed by the Members present the following were approved as drawn:-

AGM dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021, adjourned AGM dated 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021, Public Interest and Extraordinary General Meetings held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.

#### AGM 22.5

##### MATTERS ARISING

None which were relevant and which did not appear on the agenda for the meeting.

#### AGM 22.6

##### APPOINTMENT of INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR

Whitings PLC Accountants of March, Cambs having been proposed, seconded and unanimously approved by the members present were appointed as auditors for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

#### AGM 22.7

APPROVAL of STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS and CHEQUE LIST for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

The consideration of the Accounts was adjourned to a later meeting.

The List of Payments or Cheques was considered and having been proposed by PW, seconded by DS and approved unanimously by the members present, the List was approved.

The cost of the insurance was queried and the Clerk requested to request a review by the NFU Mutual before this year's renewal. Does the District Officer know what other Board's pay?

Similarly, do the other boards alarm their pumping stations? No maintenance of the alarms is being carried out since no bills have been raised for some time which presupposes that the buildings are not alarmed. Will this affect the insurance cover? Clerk to carry out enquiries.

#### AGM 22.8

DISTRICT OFFICER'S REPORT and DRAINAGE PROGRAMME for the current year.

It was proposed to follow the recommendations and action points in the Notes of the Annual Inspection attached. It was the turn of Lodes End District to be cleaned out. The DO had prepared a map of the drains to be cleared but there is a need to check as to the fields to receive slub so that notice can be given to the relevant landowners. Notices to be given to LS, DS and Keith Abblitt.

It was noted that some of the fields belonging to the De Ramsey Estate Companies are being farmed by tenants, so there is a need to send to RW a list of fields on the Rate Register so that we can note which are being farmed by the Estate and which by tenants.

The Works Programme as a whole having been proposed by PW, seconded by DA and agreed by all members present was duly approved.

#### AGM 22.9

APPOINTMENTS for the forthcoming year 2022/23.

AGM 22.9.1. Chairman – Mr Peter Wagstaffe proposed by RW and seconded by AW with all members present voting in favour.

AGM 22.9.2. Vice Chairman – Mr Dale Abblitt proposed by LS and seconded by DS with all members present voting in favour.

AGM 22.9.3 District Officer – Mr Leo Butler at an annual fee of £2,750 and car mileage and other approved expenses proposed by AW and seconded by LS with all members present voting in favour.

AGM 22.9.4 Clerk to the Board – Mr John Chrisp at an annual fee of £9,500 plus mileage and approved expenses but to be reduced when the function of the financial administration of the Board is handed over to the Middle Level Commissioners to take account of the fee paid for those services to the Commissioners, as proposed by DA and seconded by PW with all members present voting in favour.

#### AGM 22.10

APPROVAL of the ESTIMATES and the FIXING of the Agricultural Rate and the Local Authority Precept.

The Estimates and Calculation Sheet in relation to the Agricultural Rates and Special Levy for the Year ending the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 having been circulated prior to the Meeting were discussed and the need to take account of the steep rise in the cost of electricity was noted.

LS proposed and PW seconded the motion to adopt the Estimates and confirm the Calculation Sheet and the motion was duly carried when all members present voted in favour.

The Rate was fixed at £0.1026002 in the £ to raise £4,715.61 of its expenditure for the year and a precept was levied on the Huntingdonshire District Council to raise the balance of its expenditure in the sum of £30,793.49.

DS proposed and LS seconded the proposal that the Rate and Precept be set in accordance with the Calculation Sheet and all members present voted in favour. The Chairman and the Clerk were also directed to sign the Rate Book accordingly and copies of Estimate and Calculation Sheet are appended to these Minutes.

#### AGM 22.11.

##### BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

The Conservation Officer for the MLC had provided an updated Report on the works carried out under the Plan which was circulated amongst the Board members and a copy is appended to these Minutes.

#### AGM 22.12

##### PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk mentioned that during the the year the Planning Engineer at the MLC acted as our consultant in making points on behalf of the Board in its interests but there were none worthy of specific note.

#### AGM 22.13

##### CONSENTS TO DISCHARGE

AGM 22.13.1. Hill Partnerships Limited – outfall into the district drain on the southeastern side of Stocking Fen Road opposite the development RA3; Ramsey Northern Gateway (High Lode):

It was reported that the discharge from this site could be 9 litres a minute. The Board is upgrading pipes in this drain with the pumping of this extra water in mind. We need a sufficient Development Contribution to upgrade the Pump at Stocking Fen at a not-too-distant date. The Building Contractors, Architects and Surveyors wish to meet with Members of the Board to discuss the size of the contribution. The Board authorised DA to conduct the negotiations. The Board will seek £50,000 with some latitude to accept £40,000 if there was thought to be justification.

AGM 22.13.2. Rose Homes Limited – outfall into district drain at the rear of the former Shotbolts Yard, Newtown Road, Ramsey. The application is ongoing. A Development Contribution will be required here as well. The Board will gauge the success of the negotiations with Hill Partnerships before fixing a figure.

AGM 22.14.

BANK MANDATE with Barclays Bank.

To be drawn by Clerk after consultation with MLC. Wording to be decided and agreed with the Bank.

AGM 22.15.

FORMAL OPENING of Stocking Fen Weed Screen Cleaner.

Put an article in the local Press, Ramsey Informer and Fens Magazine. Too late to have a formal event.

AGM 22.16.

AGM 22.16.1.

TO RECEIVE INTERNAL AUDITORS' REPORT for the audit of the Board's finances and governance for the Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

No formal Report yet.

AGM 22.16.2

TO APPROVE the Amended Statement of Accounts for the Year ending the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The Statement of Accounts appended to these Minutes having been circulated was discussed and approved by the Board. DA proposed that it be approved and LS seconded the motion which was passed with all members present voting in favour.

AGM 22.16.3

TO AUTHORISE the Chairman and Clerk to sign the AGAR for the Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The AGAR calculations having been circulated with the Statement of Accounts were approved and the Chairman and Clerk were authorised to sign the AGAR incorporating those figures. A copy of the AGAR is attached. DA proposed this, LS seconded the proposal and with all members present voting in favour the Chairman and Clerk were authorised.

AGM 22.17

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business the meeting having started at 7 pm finished at 8.50 pm.