

MINUTES of an EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Board held at the Old Nene Golf & Country Club, Muchwood Lane, Ramsey, Cambs on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 at 7.15 p.m.

Present: Mr Peter Wagstaffe (Chairman), Mr Dale Abblitt (Vice Chairman), Mr Derek Smith, Mr Andrew Wagstaffe, Mr Lloyd Smith, Mr Leo Butler (District Officer) and Mr John Chrisp (Clerk).

#### EGM 22.1.1

APOLOGIES were received from Mr Rupert Waters and Councillor John Palmer.

#### EGM 22.1.2

##### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

#### EGM 22.1.3

##### TO ACCEPT THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT:

The Clerk reported that we were in the process of handing over the management of the Board's Finances for the Year beginning the 1st April 2022.

The deadline for submission of the AGAR for the y/e 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was 30/9/21. We gave notice to the Auditors in advance that we would not be able to meet the deadline since meetings had taken place with the MLC to clear the Accounts to the 31/3/21 with the Internal Auditors (Whittings). Robert Hill had sent the draft amendments to the Internal Auditors and when agreed by them the AGAR will be produced. Currently, the Board awaits a response from the Internal Auditors.

Moneys have been received from the Environment Agency for High Land Water Contributions payable to date. The MLC Accounts Lady is reconciling differences in the Agricultural Rates Register created by changes in ownership and the removal of agricultural land from the Rate Register to land on which the Local Authority Precept is levied and when this has been done they will send out the Rate Demands for the Rates not levied. VAT claims have been done but money not received and attention is being given to this by the Clerk with the help of the MLC.

The involvement of MLC although most helpful and necessary has elongated the process of work which has to be done to prepare the handover. Steps are being taken by the Clerk to expedite this.

#### EGM 22.1.4;

TO AMEND THE MINUTES OF THE AGM of the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 paragraph 20.9.3 and 20.9.4 to authorise payment of car mileage and approved expenses to the District Officer and Clerk in addition to their fees.

This was duly proposed, seconded and unanimously approved.

#### EGM 22.1.5:

TO CONSIDER the Health and Safety Report dated 10th November 2021 (copy attached):

Lodes End PS: construction of steps and treatment of fencing of the compound (Andy Favill to be asked to quote).

Stocking Fen PS: working/security light on the side wall of the building and safety fence on edge of concrete platform to be fitted (Dale Abblitt will carry out the work}

#### EGM 22.1.6

TO CONSIDER the Ramsey Flood Investigation Report by the Cambridgeshire County Council.

This report related to the flash flooding of Field Road, Slade Close and other parts of Ramsey in December 2020. The Clerk gave an overview. Whilst this flooding did not affect any part of the catchment of the district of the Board it was important for the Board to be aware.

The Report concluded that the drainage infrastructure of Ramsey was insufficient to effectively drain Ramsey at times of extreme rainfall, e.g. capacity of the Field Road storm water sewer which was scheduled for replacement in the days of the Ramsey Urban District Council prior to 1974. The recommendations urged the statutory authorities (Risk Management Authorities and others) should investigate and carry out the necessary alterations to improve the drainage infrastructure so as to be able to drain the area effectively.

The Clerk and the MLC have proposed alterations to the Report which the County Council is considering.

When there is a final and complete Report, the Clerk will send copies to the Board Members.

#### EGM 22.1.7

APPLICATIONS for BYE-LAW CONSENTS for drainage outfalls:

- (1) Stocking Fen Development, Stocking Fen Road – Still waiting for the application. Emails and drawings have been exchanged as part of the pre-application protocol. Offer to pay a development contribution was still too small. Graham Moore of MLC, our Planning Consultant, had been asked to dig his heels in and negotiate further.
- (2) Shotbolt's Yard, Newtown Road: Still waiting for formal application from Rose Homes. Have told them our requirements i.e. plans, drawings, calculation of contribution and drawing of the proposed outfall.

#### EGM 22.1.8.

INSTALLATION OF SMART METERS at the Pumping Stations:

Appointment made for 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 when the Eon Next Engineer attended with the District Officer and the Clerk. At Lodes End PS the Engineer could not identify certain fittings on the control panel and decided he could not carry out the work without further advice from his office. He could not get this over the phone and so did not proceed but suggested the Board should telephone his office to reschedule the appointment.

EGM 22.1.9.

#### DRAIN MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME for Autumn 2022:

The District Officer said that flailing and drain clearance was due in accordance with the 2 Year Planned Cycle to be carried out over all district drains in the Lodes End district.

Also, the pipes in 2 culverts at Stocking Fen Road need to be opened up so as to replace the pipes in them by pipes of a larger diameter. The Clerk and the District officer will inspect and arrange.

More details will appear after the Annual Drainage Inspection has taken place.

EGM 22.1.10.

#### RED DIESEL FUEL TAX EXEMPTION

This ends for non-agricultural use as from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

The Clerk had mentioned to the Board in the past that ADA had taken up the matter with the UK Treasury Department to see how the abolition of the exemption for non-agricultural purposes would affect the use of red diesel in pump engines and drain clearance machinery. Guidance has now been obtained that provided the pumps and machinery are “substantially” used for the benefit of draining agricultural land then Red Diesel can be used. Clarification of “substantially” was being obtained (since then the clarification has been obtained that IDBs should be able to justify this if the drainage is necessary for draining the agricultural land in any degree, which means that the exemption for the Boards and their contractors should apply notwithstanding that houses benefit).

EGM 22.1.11.

#### CONSTITUTION OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD:

The Clerk mentioned that in order to bring the Board in line with the requirements of Schedule 1, paragraph 6(2) of the Land Drainage Act 1991, here needed to be one more Appointed Member by The Huntingdonshire District Council than the number of Elected Members. To change the number and representation of the Board Members it will be necessary to obtain the formal approval of DEFRA.

The suggested proportion is 5 Appointed Members and 4 Elected Members, a total of 9 Members.

There are currently 7 active Elected Members on the Board. John Skoulding has resigned, and for the avoidance of doubt in case this has not been recorded since he now lives out of the area on the Norfolk Coast and has tendered his resignation from the Board because of travelling difficulties. The Council have approved the proposed change in Membership in principle and will look to appoint as Appointed Members any of the Elected Members who will not be able to serve on the new Board because of the reduction in numbers.

A formal proposal will be put before the Board at the coming AGM.

EGM 22.1.12

#### AOB REMINDER of DATES:

AGM Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 7 p.m.

EGM Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 7 p.m.

The meeting having started at 7.15 p.m. ended at 8.30 p.m.