

## NORTH LEVEL DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

2 FEBRUARY 2011

At a meeting of the Board held this day at the Drainage Office, Thorney

**Present: -**

	M H S Sly (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr C Bellamy	N J Harris
B Britain	Cllr D Harrington
Cllr C J T H Brewis	N S Manser
Cllr M Cotterell MBE	Cllr S G Marthews
C J Cutteridge	H Neale
Cllr R Dobbs	Cllr M D Seymour
A E Gee	J W J Sly
T J Gee	Cllr R C Speechley
W E C Gee	A J Wadsley
P S Gray	J Waltham

**In attendance:** S H Morris (Chief Executive)  
P D Sharman (Engineer to the Board)  
C L Emery (Secretary)

### 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend were received from J A Clarke, D R Coates, G T Fisher, Cllr R Green, J H R Hoyles, P T R Hurn, Cllr Mrs P M C Potts and Cllr D Wheeler.

### 2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

#### RESOLVED (232)

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 24 November 2010, copies of which having been circulated with the agenda, be taken as read and certified under the hand of the Chairman as being a correct record of the business of such meeting.

### 3 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

#### Item 9 Amalgamation with the Nene Washlands Commissioners

The Chief Executive reported that the draft order for the amalgamation had been advertised and no objections had been received. He said that the next stage of the process could take anything from 4 to 6 months and therefore it was unlikely that the

process will be completed by the 31 March 2011. Therefore it was expected that the Commissioners would hold their annual general meeting in May as in past years.

There were no other matters arising

#### 4 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Chief Executive referred to the preface and the Finance Report enclosed with the agenda and updated the position regarding income from drainage rates by saying that to date we have now received 99.8% of the drainage rates due

He said that although the Engineers were making savings on the maintenance of drains wherever possible, this benefit could be absorbed in pumping expenditure should fuel prices continue to rise.

He explained that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had examined the accounts of expenditure referred to in his report and found the same to be correct.

Members raised no further questions and in conclusion it was

#### RESOLVED (233)

That the Financial Report be accepted and approved.

#### 5 ENGINEER'S REPORT

##### 1 Rainfall has been as follows:-

	Nov		Dec	
	mm	inch	mm	inch
a) Tydd P S	40.00	1.57	26.00	1.02
b) Sutton St Edmund	41.90	1.65	27.70	1.09
c) Thorney Offices	29.80	1.17	21.40	0.84
d) Cross Guns	29.20	1.15	29.20	1.15
e) Dog-in-a-Doublet	58.60	2.31	21.20	0.83
f) Peakirk	35.40	1.39	6.00	0.24
g) Mouth Lane	30.00	1.18	21.60	0.85
h) Hundreds	39.00	1.54	15.00	0.59

##### 2 Hydrometric Information

Date	Mean Temp Degrees Celsius	Soil Moisture Deficit -mm	Date	Mean Temp Degrees Celsius	Soil Moisture Deficit -mm
02/11/10	11.4	66.7	07/12/10	-1.8	45.2
09/11/10	9.1	52.5	14/12/10	2.4	45.4
16/11/10	5.5	50.8	21/12/10	-2.0	42.7
23/11/10	5.3	49.2	28/12/10	-0.6	38.1
30/11/10	-0.7	46.5	04/01/11	2.9	37.9
			11/01/11	3.9	23.5

**3 Pumping hours have been as follows:-**

	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
a) Poplars	40	52
b) Denhams	0	0
c) Dog-in-a-Doublet (New)		
(Large)	0	22
(Small)	0	0
Dog-in-a-Doublet ( Old )	41	10
d) Cross Guns – Electric	0	0
– Diesel	52	44
e) Mouth Lane – Electric	0	0
– Diesel	1	0
f) Willow Holt	18	32
g) Tydd – Electric	0	1
– Diesel	50	73
h) Postland	9	16
i) Newborough	8	18
j) Peakirk	3	7
k) Hundreds	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>275</b>

**4 Maintenance to 8 January 2011**

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>a) Hand roding</b>		
18,236m have been completed in urban areas		(20,520m)
<b>b) Machine roding</b>		
Hitachi ZX180	116,500m	(117,290m)
Hitachi ZX210	150,375m	(166,015m)
Berkenheger	192,915m	(225,229m)
Hired	81,115m	(81,040m)
Boat	Nil	(Nil)
Tractor & weed-basket	30,630m	(35,957m)
<b>c) Flailing</b>		
1,103,431m on one side have been completed using 4 No flail mowers		(1,132,956m)
<b>d) Mudding Out – machine</b>		
Hitachi ZX180	511m	(Nil)
Hitachi ZX210	Nil	(1,668m)
Hired	Nil	(Nil)
<b>e) Mudding Out – hand</b>	Nil	(Nil)
<b>f) Chemical weed control</b>		
Midstream GSR – tractor	Nil	(173,010m)
Midstream GSR – hand	Nil	(67,474m)
Roundup pro-biactive - tractor	72,820m	(58,830m)
Roundup pro-biactive – hand	30,292m	(7,552m)
<b>g) Piping side dykes</b>	Nil	(Nil)
<b>h) Revetment work</b>	Nil	(84m)

- i) **Properties**  
Routine maintenance carried out to all Board's properties
- j) **Faggot making** Nil (Nil)
- k) **Pumping stations**  
General repairs and maintenance carried out to all pumping stations
- l) **Water level control structures**  
The majority of dam boards and slackers have been lifted or removed and the freshwater feeds are closed.
- m) **Board's plant**  
General repairs and servicing carried out to all plant and vehicles.

## 5 Capital Works to 8 January 2011

### Tydd Pumping Station Refurbishment Phase IV

No further work.

### Proctors Drain – West Side Marshes

This is a non-grant aided scheme financed from revenue funds to improve the Proctors Drain for a length of 350 metres.

320m<sup>3</sup> of spoil has been excavated, re-profiling landward batters and lowering bed levels over 350 metres of open watercourse, in addition to this approximately 150 metres of stabilisation works have been carried out using timber piles and thorn faggots.

The batters have been grass seeded and land drain headwalls replaced, the remaining spoil will be spread once the crops are harvested.

Works are 90 % complete.

### Re-chargeable Works

#### Survey Work, Anglian Water Sewage Counter Drain

The Anglian Water Sewage Counter Drain provides an outfall for treated water from the Flag Fen Sewage Treatment Plant, which is in turn pumped into the tidal river Nene at Anglian Water's Dog-in-a-Doublet Pumping Station.

The Board's engineers raised their concerns over the condition of the Sewage Counter Drain at the Peterborough Water Cycle Study meetings and more recently at the Peterborough Surface Water Management meetings, as a result of this a working group was formed specifically to look into the problems with the Counter Drain.

Historically the Counter Drain and the Anglian Water Pumps have coped with the flows discharged by the Flag Fen Sewage Treatment Plant, only using the relief channel to the North Level system occasionally in times of high flow.

However more recently the Anglian Water pumps have become unreliable and the condition of the Counter Drain has deteriorated to such an extent, that the North Level

Dog-in-a-Doublet Pumping Station is being used to carry out relief pumping for Anglian Water on an increasingly regular basis albeit rechargeable.

As a result of these group meetings the North Level have been contracted to carry out a site survey of the Counter Drain on a rechargeable basis and Atkins are providing the hydraulic modelling work. By carrying out these studies the current level of service provided by the Anglian Water Pumps and Counter Drain will be ascertained, all the work being financed by Peterborough City Council.

### **Drain Surveying LCC**

In conjunction with the construction of the new A1073, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) have approached the Board's engineers to carry out site surveys on a number of private drains adjacent to the new road.

Approximately 3500 metres of drains have been surveyed using the Board's GPS survey equipment and drawings produced. In addition to this the Board's engineers have designed improvement schemes for the drains and estimated for the remedial works required.

### **Drain Improvements – Phase 1, Crowland**

This is a scheme financed by Lincolnshire County Council to improve three private drains at Crowland totalling a length of 740 metres.

Works began on site on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011 with trees and hedge removal using the Board's Hitachi ZX210 and Dymax tree shears

### **Crowland Parish Council Drain Works – Crowland**

In conjunction with the construction of the new A1073 and the Green Drove link road, Crowland Parish Council have approached the Board's engineers to construct a new drain adjacent to the newly constructed Green Drove link road at Crowland for a length of 542 metres.

Financed by Crowland Parish Council, works commenced on site on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011 using the Board's Hitachi ZX180.

### **Schemes prepared but not yet started**

Hundreds Drain – Crowland  
Whitehall Drain Phase II - Postland  
Culpin's Drain Phase II – Newborough  
Culpin's Spur Drain Phase II - Newborough  
Tydd catchment strategy modelling  
Tanholt Drain – Eye  
Clough Cross sluice refurbishment – Parson Drove

### **Schemes being prepared**

Thirty Chain Spur Drain – Postland  
Old Wryde Drain - Murrow  
Foul Anchor sluice refurbishment – Foul Anchor  
Telemetry upgrade  
Steward House Drain Phase II – Thorney  
Mossops pipeline – Newborough  
Main Drain Phase 2 – Tydd Gote

**P D Sharman**

The Engineer updated the Hydrometric data and pumping hours. He also advised members that whilst every endeavour was being made to reduce costs this year, the reduction in the mudding out programme must be a one-off and must be resumed the following year in order to ensure the efficiency of drainage system. However, at the moment whilst the machines were not working on North Level works they were being employed on rechargeable schemes. He then went on to update members on his report.

#### k) Pumping stations

He said that there had been an issue with Denham Pumping Station where it had not been possible to keep the pump running for any length of time. He has investigated the problems which could be causing this, ruling out wiring issues in the panel and electric motor faults. It transpired that the pump needed removing which has been carried out by Shoebridge Engineering of Spalding, who are at this time looking into the cause of the problem, This work was expected to take a further three weeks.

#### m) Board's plant

The Engineer informed members that the teleporter is due for delivery in March and will be plated as a 2011 machine purchased at 2010 price.

#### Capital Works

The Engineer said that extensive surveying work had been undertaken along the course of the Sewage Counter Drain. He went on to say that there was disagreement as to who actually owned the drain, but for the time being Peterborough City Council and Anglian Water have agreed to pay for the survey work. This investigation has been prompted by the additional development due to be carried out at the Hamptons in Peterborough with a view to passing on costs for any upgrading work which may be necessary to the counter drain, to the developers.

He informed members that contracts with Lincolnshire County Council had been received for drainworks on four further drains in connection with the A1073 road.

Of the schemes being prepared he said that the Tydd Catchment strategy modelling scheme had been awarded grant aid of £20,000 over the next two years which would be mostly spent on the catchment modelling which would be carried out by consultants. Grant aid had also been received for refurbishing the Cloughs Cross sluices and for automating the sluice doors via the Boards telemetry system. Mossops pipeline refurbishment scheme has also been submitted to the Environment Agency in the hope of attracting grant aid.

Cllr Marthews asked if feed-in tariffs had been investigated with regard to the running of the pumping stations. The Engineer responded that alternative power provision was investigated when Tydd refurbishment plans were being drawn up, but not with a view to feed-in tariffs. He said that he would investigate feed-in tariffs and whether there are any likely benefits to the board.

Following further discussion and there being no further questions it was:

#### **RESOLVED (234)**

That the Engineer's Report be accepted and approved.

**6 PAY AWARD**

The Chief Executive reported that should the Board wish to continue with the pay formula agreed under resolution 1650, then applying the formula of 90% of the National Average Earnings of 2.1% as published in the Sunday Times on the last Sunday in January, would result in 1.89% pay award for this forthcoming year.

**7 RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2011**

Mr J Sly (Chairman of the Governance & Audit Committee) reported on behalf of the Audit Committee, he asked members to note the Audit Committee's recommendation in Item 7, the Financial Estimates, when considering item 8 on the Board agenda. Following a brief discussion it was

**RESOLVED(235)**

To approve and apply the pay formula as per Resolution 1650

**RESOLVED(236)**

To approve and accept the Procurement Policy

**RESOLVED(237)**

To approve and accept the Board's Strategy Plan 2011

**RESOLVED(238)**

To approve and accept the Internal Auditor's Fixed Asset report dated 1 November 2010

**RESOLVED(239)**

To approve and accept the Internal Auditor's Drainage Rate Income report dated 28 December 2010

**RESOLVED(240)**

To approve and accept the Internal Auditor's Annual Internal Audit report dated June to December 2010

**RESOLVED(241)**

To approve and accept the Internal Audit Plan for 2011/12

The Chief Executive reported on the pre-audit meeting with Grant Thornton on the 31 January 2011 which was attended by himself, the Engineer and Mr Spurr. He said that at the meeting he was advised by Mr Nick Caley that both Mr Paul Winrow, Engagement Lead and Nick Caley Audit Manager, had been seconded elsewhere and that their roles were being taken over by Engagement Lead Paul Hughes and Audit Manager Richard Lawson. The Chief Executive said that he understood that Mr Lawson had some experience of working with IDB's. He went on to say that the Engineers would contact Grant Thornton to arrange the end of year stock take towards the end of March 2011. Mr Spurr had requested more time be given between the audit and the published accounts being issued, in order to better address any issues arising. Grant Thornton are also to issue guidance on the accounting procedure they require for dealing with invoices issued in February due for payment in April, ie. the following financial year.

The Vice-Chairman then thanked Mr Sly and the Governance & Audit Committee for carrying out this function so efficiently.

**8 TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR, LAY DRAINAGE RATES AND FIX SPECIAL LEVIES**

The Chief Executive referred to his estimates of the financial requirements of the Board for the twelve months ending 31 March 2012, a copy of which having accompanied the notice of the meeting.

The Chief Executive continued by saying that he had given a detailed explanation of the items therein to the Governance and Audit Committee who had recommended that a drainage rate of 10.69p in the £ be made for Area 1 and 7.26p in the £ for Area 2.

After a full discussion, with the Chief Executive answering members' questions in connection with his estimates, it was

**RESOLVED (242)**

- 1 That the drainage rate for Area 1 for the financial year ending 31 March 2012 be fixed at 10.69p in the £
- 2 That the following Special Levies for Area 1 be issued for the year:-

Fenland District Council	£311,304
Peterborough City Council	£259,479
South Holland District Council	£127,850

It was also **RESOLVED (243)**

- 1 That the drainage rate for Area 2 for the financial year ending 31 March 2012 be fixed at 7.26p in the £
- 2 That the Special Levy for Area 2 of £14,508 be issued to Fenland District Council

**9 TOTAL PLACE / TOTAL ENVIRONMENT**

The Engineer reported that Lincolnshire County Council had invited members of the Lincolnshire Drainage Boards to a meeting to discuss Total Place attended by the Chairman, the Chief Executive and himself.. To date there has been no notes issued from that meeting and no guidance for IDB's has been received. Lincolnshire County Council are at present scheduling further informal discussions with District Councils to discuss various topics within Total Place. As yet there is no clear idea of the implication to either Drainage Boards or District Councils.

The Engineer further reported that various consultations were being considered by Local Lead Flood Authorities as well as some individual Boards and ADA. The Engineer reminded members that we are working in partnership with Lincolnshire and

Cambridgeshire County Councils and Peterborough City who will all issue responses to the following consultation documents:

Consultation on Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) Scheme of Membership, Terms of Reference and Standing Orders

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England

Future Funding for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management

Local Flood Authorities' contribution to sustainable development: statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

He then quoted the EFRA Committees' flood and water management report, dated 04/01/2011 highlighting "on IDB's the report recommended that reforms to their operations which should be on an incremental, localised basis, and not a "one size fits all" approach. The Committee recommended that the Government's Water White Paper should set out the broad principles for the evolution of the relationship between IDBs and other agencies with drainage functions of the next 5 years, allowing for local implementation according to the specific needs of each area. The report also called on Defra to consider the potential for IDBs to retain levy money currently paid to the Environment Agency in order to utilise IDB resources to undertake river course maintenance on behalf of the Environment Agency."

The Engineer further went on to reference the criticism of the Public Bodies Bill by House of Commons Select Committee dated 07/01/2011, where it was stated "It seems clear to us that the Bill as originally drafted contains insufficient safeguards to prevent the misuse of powers by ministers. It is essential that the exercise of powers under this Bill is subject to rigorous Parliamentary scrutiny. We will be carefully following the Bill's progress in the House of Lords. We are currently minded that the Bill should contain a general sunset clause; it should only serve the current review and fresh primary legislation should be required for future reviews. We will issue a further report on this Bill itself after it has completed all its Lords stages, and reserve our judgement as to whether additional safeguards will be needed."

## **10 PLANNING MATTERS**

### **(a) Applications**

Relevant Fenland District Council and Peterborough City Council members, wished to confirm that they attended the meeting and that they took no part in debate or voting on any planning application thereon. The Engineer referred to his Planning Report, a copy of which having been circulated with the agenda and being attached to these minutes, in which were listed those planning applications received since the last meeting of the Board where it had been necessary for him to respond to the Planning Authority in respect of drainage matters.

There were no comments made on the applications.

(b) Enforcements

The Engineer advised members that there were currently a number of ongoing enforcements.

There were no questions on this matter, it was therefore

**RESOLVED (244)**

That the report be received and its contents noted.

**11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

As part of the North Level's on-going community interaction, members were shown a short animated video based on a history of the drainage of the fens, created by local school children with assistance from Thorney Heritage. The film was produced in the Board's offices.

There was no other business.