

NORTH LEVEL DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

22 JUNE 2011

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

Present: -

J H R Hoyles (Chairman)

Cllr F Biggadike	P T R Hurn
B Britain	N S Manser
J A Clarke	H Neale
D R Coates	Cllr M D Seymour
Cllr M Cotterell MBE	J W J Sly
C J Cutteridge	R C Speechley
A E Gee	A J Wadsley
W E C Gee	J Waltham
P S Gray	

In attendance:

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

Before commencing the business of the meeting the Chairman informed members of the recent death of Mr William Riddington aged 80 years, who had been a member of the Board representing the Postland area for a number of years prior to his retirement to the Norfolk coast.

Members stood in silence as a mark of respect

The Chairman also reported that following the recent Council elections, Mr Stamford Marthews who had been on the Board as a representative of South Holland District Council for a number of years had not been re-elected and therefore was no longer representing SHDC on the Board. He said that Mr Marthews had sent a letter saying how much he had enjoyed being on the Board. The Chairman then welcomed Cllr Francis Biggadike back onto the Board as one of the representatives of South Holland District Council.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Cllr C J T H Brewis, Cllr R Dobbs, G T Fisher, T J Gee, Cllr R Green, N J Harris, Mrs P M C Potts, and M H S Sly

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED (253)

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 20 April 2011, 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

8 PURCHASE OF ACCESS ROAD TO CROSS GUNS PUMPING STATION AND KNARR LAKE

The Engineer informed members that the purchase was almost complete, the Land Transfer documents had been completed and that we were currently awaiting action by the Environment Agency to finalise the purchase.

There were no other matters arising

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Chief Executive referred to his Financial Report a copy of which having been circulated with the agenda and being attached to these minutes. 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.

After the Chief Executive had further expanded upon his report and Members raised no further questions, in conclusion it was

RESOLVED (254)

That the Financial Report be accepted and approved.

6 ENGINEER'S REPORT

1 Rainfall has been as follows:-

	April		May	
	mm	inch	mm	inch
a) Tydd P S	5.80	0.23	17.50	0.69
b) Sutton St Edmund	2.80	0.11	22.30	0.88
c) Thorney Offices	3.90	0.15	21.40	0.84
d) Cross Guns	4.50	0.18	21.60	0.85
e) Dog-in-a-Doublet	3.40	0.13	22.80	0.90
f) Peakirk	2.40	0.09	18.60	0.73
g) Mouth Lane	5.60	0.22	20.60	0.81
h) Hundreds	2.50	0.10	20.00	0.79

2 Hydrometric Information

Date	Mean Temp Degrees Celsius	Soil Moisture Deficit -mm	Date	Mean Temp Degrees Celsius	Soil Moisture Deficit -mm
05/04/11	11.3	40.8	03/05/11	10.7	91.3
12/04/11	11.8	56.3	10/05/11	14.0	99.9
19/04/11	11.1	67.4	17/05/11	12.4	107.9
26/04/11	13.5	80.8	24/05/11	13.0	115.9
			31/05/11	12.8	115.5

3 Pumping hours have been as follows:-

	April	May
a) Poplars	30	5
b) Denhams	0	0
c) Dog-in-a-Doublet (New)		
(Large)	0	0
(Small)	0	0
Dog-in-a-Doublet (Old)	10	0
d) Cross Guns – Electric	0	0
– Diesel	30	0
e) Mouth Lane – Electric	0	0
– Diesel	0	0
f) Willow Holt	12	0
g) Tydd – Electric	0	0
– Diesel	46	8
h) Postland	0	0
i) Newborough	0	0
j) Peakirk	2	0
k) Hundreds	0	0
Total	130	13

4 Maintenance to 28 May 2011

	2011	2010
a) Hand roding	Nil	(Nil)
b) Machine roding		
Hitachi ZX180	Nil	(Nil)
Hitachi ZX210	Nil	(Nil)
Berkenheger	Nil	(Nil)
Hired Nil	Nil	(Nil)
Boat Nil	Nil	(Nil)
Tractor & weed-basket	Nil	(Nil)
c) Flailing	Nil	(Nil)

d) Mudding Out – machine		
Hitachi ZX180	Nil	(Nil)
Hitachi ZX210	Nil	(Nil)
Hired Nil	Nil	
e) Mudding Out – hand	Nil	(Nil)
f) Chemical weed control		
Roundup pro-biactive - tractor	24,200m	(67,470m)
Roundup pro-biactive – hand	18,490m	(17,724m)
Roundup pro-biactive – Berky	55,584m	(Nil)
g) Piping side dykes	Nil	(Nil)
h) Revetment work	Nil	(Nil)
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		
Slackers are down and dam boards are in place. The freshwater feeds remain open.		
m) Board's plant		
General repairs and servicing carried out to all plant and vehicles.		

5 Capital Works to 31 May 2011

Mossop's Pipeline – Newborough

This is a grant aided scheme financed from Flood Defence Grant in Aid (45%) and North Level development levy funds (55%). This scheme has been designed to improve a 200 metre length of pipeline in Newborough village, originally constructed in 1980, the pipeline serves approximately 56 residential properties.

Due to established trees adjacent to the pipeline the pipe has become blocked by roots, reducing the cross sectional area by 95%. This is now clearly limiting the efficiency of the pipeline and reducing the level of protection provided to the properties upstream.

Works started on the scheme in February 2011 with the clearance of the trees over the pipe, the remaining works started early in May 2011 with the excavation of the existing 0.6 metre diameter pipeline. To date 90 metres has been re-constructed using 0.9 metre diameter pipe, and the foundations for 3 No inspection chambers prepared.

In addition to this, the remaining pipeline upstream which is difficult to access, has been lined; this process includes the cleansing of the pipe with a high pressure water jet followed by the installation of a liner using a controlled head inversion process and steam curing. This process has now been completed.

The works are 60% complete.

Clough Sluice Refurbishment – Parson Drove

This is a grant aided scheme financed from Flood Defence Grant in Aid (45%) and North Level development levy funds (55%). Originally constructed in the 1800's and re-commissioned in 1994 the sluice gates have received limited maintenance.

The works started in March 2011 with the lifting of the sluice gates and component parts off the Clough Bridge structure. These were then transported to Fentec Powder Coating and Shot Blasting in Peterborough. Scaffold was erected to provide access to the sluice framework remaining on the bridge structure.

All parts have now been shot blasted and painted using a two pack glass flake epoxy paint system, in addition to this all wiring has been replaced and two new control cabinets fabricated. The sluice gates have now been reinstated and are fully operational.

The works are 80% complete.

Tydd Catchment Strategy & Modelling

This is a grant aided scheme financed from Flood Defence Grant in Aid (45%) and North Level revenue funds (55%).

The Tydd Catchment covers an area of 14,565 hectares, and outfalls via the Tydd Pumping Station into the tidal River Nene. Approximately 11,273 hectares discharges into the Main Drain by gravity the remaining 3,292 hectares is pumped via the Poplars, Willow Holt, Denhams and Hundreds Pumping Stations.

The aim of this study is to hydraulically model approximately 85km of open watercourse within the Tydd Catchment. The results from this study will determine the overall level of protection provided to agriculture, residential and industrial assets in the catchment. In addition to this, the results of the study will be used to determine future capital investments and improvement works programmes, also identifying and supporting works suitable for Flood Defence Grant in Aid.

The study is being managed by the Boards Engineers, the 85km of watercourse are being surveyed by the Boards Engineering Assistant with the recently purchased GPS survey equipment and Coastal and Rivers Engineering Consultants Royal Haskoning have been awarded the modelling contract.

To date approximately 75km of survey work has been completed and 60km plotted on AutoCAD, the modelling work is due to start late June 2011

Project is 45% complete

Tanholt Drain – Eye

This is a non grant aided scheme financed from development levy, designed to improve the Tanholt Drain for a length of approximately 1600 metres. This drain provides an outfall to a recent development of some 1.1 hectares.

To date 3200 thorn faggots have been cut and transported to site in readiness for this scheme, and approximately 1500 cubic metres of spoil has been excavated with 2No access culverts reconstructed.

Works are 35% complete.

Little Ramper – Westside Marshes

This is a non grant aided scheme financed from Westside Marshes revenue, designed to improve the Little Ramper Drain for a length of approximately 550 metres.

Approximately 1500 cubic metres of spoil has been excavated, and 2No side dyke culverts constructed to provide improved access for the Boards maintenance plant. The remaining spoil has been carted from site for use by a local farmer, and the drain batters grass seeded.

The works are now complete.

Main Drain Phase 2 – Tydd Gote

This is a non-grant aided scheme financed from development and revenue funds designed to improve the Main Drain from Tydd Pumping Station to Clough Cross Sluice.

Phase 2 of the works improved a 750 metre length of the Main Drain between the Old Shire Drain outfall and the A1101 Main Road Bridge with approximately 15,000 cubic metres of silt being excavated from the drain and stored in holding lagoons on the south bank.

The 2011 phase of the project has been carried out using a 38RB dragline on hire from Taylor Dredging Ltd, the works began in April 2011 and are due to be completed by 10th June 2011.

The works are 80% complete

Rechargeable Works

Drain Improvements – Carringtons Drove, Crowland

This is a scheme financed by Lincolnshire County Council to improve approximately 569 metres of watercourse.

Approximately 1000 cubic metres of spoil has been excavated and 4No access culverts have been reconstructed.

The works are now complete.

Fenland District Council – Birch Fen Award Drain Survey

The Boards Engineers were approached by Fenland District Council (FDC) to carry out a detailed survey of the Birch Fen Award Drain in Chatteris.

The survey was carried out on a rechargeable basis to FDC, to ascertain the current condition of the drain with a view to possible improvement works in the future.

The work is now complete.

Schemes prepared but not yet started

Hundreds Drain Phase I – Crowland
Whitehall Drain Phase II - Postland
Culpin's Drain Phase II – Newborough
Culpin's Spur Drain Phase II - Newborough

Schemes being prepared

Thirty Chain Spur Drain – Postland
Old Wryde Drain Phase I- Murrow
Foul Anchor sluice refurbishment – Foul Anchor
Telemetry upgrade
Steward House Drain Phase II – Thorney
Main Drain Phase 3 – Tydd Gote
Hundreds Drain Phase II – Crowland

P D SHARMAN

The Engineer updated the Hydrometric data and pumping hours. He then went on to update members on his report.

Capital Works

Tydd Pumping Station

The Engineer apologised for omitting this item off his report and advised members that completion of the updating of pumps 5 and 6 had been delayed due to vandalism and burglary as reported to the previous meeting, but were now fully operational, some small telemetry issues are yet to be addressed which it is hoped will be resolved by the end of this current week.

Annual Barn Owl Census

He informed members that of the 12 owl boxes erected on the Board's properties 5 boxes contained owls with a total of 12 chicks, and 6 contained Kestrels with a total of 17 chicks and 7 eggs. He said that the Hawk and Owl Trust who had erected the boxes were very pleased with our support of their cause.

ADA Demonstration

He then advised members that following our successful hosting during the mid 1980s of the ADA Demonstration we had been requested to again host the working machine and plant demonstration at Cross Guns. This would take place sometime in July 2013, date to be confirmed.

In response to a question from Cllr Cotterell, he said that there was no further news regarding the opening of the A1073.

In response to a question from Mr Neale he said that the 38RB dredging at Tydd Gote had been carried out in close consultation with Tydd Gote Angling Club and that only one small complaint had been received from a local resident regarding loss of river views from their house due to spoil heaps. He concluded that this has been dealt with.

Roundup Pro-biactive

The Engineer advised members that the current situation regarding the withdrawal of Roundup Pro-biactive was likely to happen within the next four years. The Chairman added that this withdrawal was due to market forces in as much as Monsanto the manufacturers, do not feel that there is sufficient demand for the product for them to continue licensing it for aquatic use. The Engineer said that the effect of the withdrawal could increase costs to the Board of anything up to £50,000 by having to carry out two weed cuts to the drains, one in early June and one at the normal time. He concluded by saying that we will be vociferous in joining the campaign for the retention of this product.

Grant In Aid Funding

He said that the Board had been approached by the Environment Agency prior to the end of March, advising that they had some funds remaining for Grant in Aid projects, and we accordingly received funds in March this year for the following Schemes.

Mossops Drain – Pipeline
Clough Cross Sluice Refurbishment

He said that Grant in Aid funding from the Environment Agency was becoming more of a lottery, based on the percentage of the total cost which was being requested. Evidently the lower percentage requested the more favourably the project was considered for funding.

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

RESOLVED (255)

That the Engineer's Report be accepted and approved.

7 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee referred to the minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting held on the 7 June 2011 and asked the Chief Executive to briefly explain the Revenue Accounts and Management Accounts, a copy of which having been circulated with the agenda. The Chief Executive explained that the Drainage Rate levy was directly related to the Revenue Accounts, he explained the figures presented, highlighting the savings made during the year. He continued by saying that for ease of understanding, Members would be presented with Management Accounts, in the same format as the Statement of Accounts in previous years, as well as the completed Annual Return.

This would ensure that we complied with the Limited Assurance regime and enable the Board to make substantial savings in external audit fees.

When the Chief Executive had concluded his report, the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee requested approval of the recommendations made by the Audit Committee at their meeting on 7 June.

After a brief discussion it was

RESOLVED (256)

(a) To approve and accept the Accounting Statements for year ended 31 March 2011

RESOLVED (257)

(b) To approve and accept the Annual Governance Statement for year ended 31 March 2011

RESOLVED (258)

(c) To approve and accept the Annual Internal Audit Report for year ended 31 March 2011

The Chairman passed over the recommendation under Item 6 to Item 10 on the main Agenda.

Members asked their thanks to the Chief Executive and Staff be recorded, in making the substantial savings as reported.

8 PUBLIC BODIES BILL, TOTAL PLACE AND PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Engineer advised members of the current situation regarding Total Place within Lincolnshire. He said that this was a three tier partnership where the roles and responsibilities were just beginning to be established, particularly in identifying who will carry out the work and how it will be funded. At the moment the operations groups had highlighted a number of locations where work is required but there is no budget to carry out these works. To address this, Lincolnshire County Council is looking for ways to make efficiency and cost savings within the county, across the whole flood risk agenda by pooling all funding appertaining to flood risk. This includes LCC, the Environment Agency, Drainage Boards and District Councils.

Historically the Environment Agency have been collecting a General Drainage Charge from occupiers of agricultural land outside of Drainage Board boundaries and then making payments to the relevant Board for dealing with highland water discharging into that Boards area.

The proposal from the Lincolnshire Boards is for the Drainage Boards to extend their boundaries, currently set by the Medway Letter, to hydraulic catchment boundaries incorporating these highland water payment areas for this purpose only. Then to collect this levy (General Drainage Charge) and hand it to the Lincolnshire County Council with the proviso that the Board will undertake any remedial work required on behalf of the County Council within these hydraulic catchment boundaries.

This would not affect the North Level District Board as there is no highland water feeding into our district. The proposals are still at discussion level and the Engineer said that he would keep members apprised of the situation.

9 ADA CONFERENCE

The Chief Executive reported that in previous years five delegates had represented the Board at the ADA Conference, namely the Chairman, Vice Chairman, The Chief Executive, The Engineer and one Council member on a rotating basis. He suggested that savings in both money and time could be made if the number of delegates were reduced to three. After a short discussion it was

RESOLVED(259)

To reduce the delegate places to three with effect from this year. This would be one place for either the Chairman/Vice Chairman, one place for the Chief Executive/Engineer and one place for a Council Representative, which this year would be from South Holland District Council.

10 RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

The Engineer highlighted his findings on the two renewable energy projects utilising the Feed-in Tariffs as requested. Before the item was opened for discussion the Chief Executive outlined members legal responsibilities in regard to the Lawful undertakings within the Land Drainage Act as follows:

- 1) The project must be in “pursuance of or ancillary to” the IDB’s statutory functions:
As the power generated by either solar or wind is to be offset against the power consumed by the Board it is “ancillary to” the IDB’s statutory powers, and therefore lawful.
- 2) The Board can carry out any development on land in its ownership, subject to any necessary planning consents, as long as it can be shown to be for the benefit of the ratepayers.
- 3) Members must therefore decide whether the returns from any such project, based on the information provided, can be judged to be in the best interests of the Ratepayers and to be the best use of public funds.

There followed a full discussion where a member stated that the Drainage Board is given permissive powers to undertake work to secure clean water drainage and water level management and he did not feel it was in their remit to speculate with ratepayers money. Doubts were expressed when looking at costs and savings over a twenty plus year term, with no surety of the predicted prices of fuel and energy. In response to a question, the Engineer said that in his opinion there would be insufficient returns regarding renting the roof-space to a Solar Power provider.

Therefore it was

RESOLVED (260)

That the Engineer investigates further and obtains three quotations for a solar power installation at Cross Guns P.S. and to present his findings to the November Board meeting.

11 CONDERATION OF CO-OPTION TO FILL THE CASUAL VACANCY

The Chief Executive advised members that following Mr Speechley's resignation as an elected member a casual vacancy, in the Eastern area, had been created. A nomination was received and seconded for Mr William Gee to be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy.

Therefore it was

RESOLVED(261)

That Mr William Gee be invited to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Speechley.

13 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Applications

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 (262)

That the report is received and its contents noted.

14 STAFF MATTERS

The Engineer reported that both Mr K Fletcher and Mr R Burnham would be retiring this year, and that he proposed not to replace them at this time. He said that Mr S Tegerdine would be moving into Cross Guns pumping station house to undertake pumping station duties along with drain maintenance work.

He also said that as part of his duties Mr J Jenkins, Junior Engineer, was currently undertaking a lot of survey work where access in a car was often difficult. The Engineer requested that the Board considered that the 5 year old Landrover Freelander currently used by Mr Burnham, be passed on to Mr Jenkins on Mr Burnham's forthcoming retirement, if agreed the vehicle would only be used for travelling to and from the office and for business use.

Following a brief discussion where the Engineer said that he was trying to operate without replacing either Mr Fletcher or Mr Burnham, but that the situation may need to be reviewed, it was

RESOLVED(263)

That the Freelander currently used by Mr Burnham be passed to Mr Jenkins in September on Mr Burnham's retirement.

Mrs Emery left the room

Mr Johnson Operations Engineer joined the meeting

14 DVD – A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF THE NOTH LEVEL OPERATIONS

The Operations Engineer explained the reasoning for commissioning Movingmemory, a professional video company, to record over the period of one year the Boards activities. It was agreed to purchase additional copies to distribute to schools and other interested parties locally.

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In response to a question as to why the entrance lay-by to Tydd pumping station had been fenced, the Engineer reported that although we had suffered no further break-in at the site it was deemed prudent to prevent vehicles parking on the Boards property adjacent to the fuel tank.

There was no other business