

**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY SECOND MEETING OF THE WAVENEY, LOWER YARE AND  
LOTHINGLAND INTERNATIONAL DRAINAGE BOARD HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2017 AT 2 O'CLOCK AT  
HADDISCOE VILLAGE HALL**

**Present:** Mr B Collen (Chairman)  
Mr H Carrie (Vice Chairman)  
Mr R Basey-Fisher  
Mr R Beevor  
Mr J Brown  
Mr M Caston  
Mr J Fiennes  
Mr A Kerkhoff  
Mr C Mutton  
Mr D Watson  
Councillor B Lawn (GYBC)  
Councillor T Andrews (GYBC)  
Councillor M Fairhead (GYBC)  
Councillor J Savage (SNDC)  
Councillor K Worsley (SNDC)  
Councillor G Nurden (Broadland)

**In attendance:** Mr B Blower (Clerk)  
Mr T Lewis (SNDC)

**Apologies:** Mr H Budgen  
Mr D Burroughs  
Mr P Cargill  
Mr W Slater  
Councillor B Bernard (SNDC)  
Councillor C Gould (SNDC)  
Councillor C Rivett (WDC)

**22.1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 were unanimously approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

**22.2 Matters Arising**

Minute 21.3 following further discussion with the Environment Agency regarding the Highland Water contributions the Clerk reported that the Agency had offered a 5% increase in their contribution towards the costs on the two affected levels which he had initially declined on the basis that he was concerned that this would mean that the Agency would do nothing further on the matter. After some discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should accept the offer on the basis that this was an interim arrangement only and he should take the lack of action on the

part of the Agency further by referring this issue to the relevant Members of Parliament, that is Richard Bacon and Peter Aldous.

Minute 21.6.6 the Clerk was asked for an update regarding the integrated main river maintenance programme. He advised that he had put forward a programme of work on main river for approval and that he was looking to enter into a Public Sector Cooperation Agreement with the Agency to facilitate the carrying out of the work. This would depend upon funding being approved.

### **22.3 Approval of Accounts**

Copies of the accounts for the Board for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 had been circulated with the draft annual return as completed by the internal auditor with a summary of the comparisons between estimated and actual expenditure for each level. Board members had considered the figures. The accounts were then approved.

### **22.4 Annual Return for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

The Board considered the annual return and in particular the annual governance statement at section 1 and then the accountant's statements in section 2. It was unanimously agreed that the content of the annual return be approved and the Chairman and the Clerk were authorised to sign them.

### **22.5 Internal Auditor's Report**

The internal auditor's report had been circulated and it was noted that there were no recommendations and the report was accepted. The Chairman drew attention to the National Audit Office report on Internal Drainage Boards dated 21st March 2017 which the Clerk had circulated with the Agenda. The Chairman encouraged members to consider the report.

### **22.6 Health and Safety Report**

Mr Mutten reported that he had continued to carry out work place inspections and he said that there had been no accidents and no near misses. His inspections had included the pump replacement works being undertaken at Askews and he commented that the work practices on site had been excellent.

Mr Mutten drew attention to the problems at Caldecott as highlighted in his report to the Clerk dated 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017 a copy of which is attached to these Minutes. Board members were in no doubt that it was now necessary to take action swiftly to address the problems that had been identified and this would include removing the Board's electrical equipment from the old mill and installing them in a new kiosk. A new pump attendant who was competent to deal with the matters at Caldecott should also be appointed. It was anticipated that this was likely to lead to conflict with Mr and Mrs Roberts as their approach to the Board had been hostile. It was therefore agreed that the Clerk should commission a further inspection of the site to verify Mr Mutten's findings so that he had the added support and backup of the second report should there be a dispute over the condition of the site and the problems that had been identified. It

was agreed also that all the rate payers on the level should be advised as to what was happening so that they were warned of the additional cost that was going to be incurred arising from these decisions.

## **22.7 Capital Schemes**

### **22.7.1 Benacre Pump Scheme**

The Clerk reported on current progress with the scheme. At this stage investigations are still continuing into the viability (including indicative costs) of various possible alternative ways of defending the Lothingland Hundred River Valley, including parts of Kessingland, from the sea. This includes liaising with all relevant stakeholders to investigate possible sources of funding. This work is being led by Karen Thomas of the Water Management Alliance on behalf of the Board. The Project Team for the scheme which principally comprised officers from the Councils and others with the technical expertise required to implement any scheme had last met on 5<sup>th</sup> May when they received the latest report from CH2M. The Clerk represents the Board on the Project Team. The next meeting of the Project Team is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> July. At that meeting a Steering Group will be formed to oversee the whole project which will comprise representatives from the Environment Agency, the Councils, Natural England, the Parish Councils, principal landowners and the MP Peter Aldous and a representative from IDB. Henry Budgen from the Board had indicated his willingness to serve on the Steering Group and this appointment was approved. The Clerk briefly outlined the range of options that were being considered and the possible costs. It was acknowledged that in the immediate future the Board may be called upon to make a contribution towards the cost of providing rock to carry out emergency repairs for this coming winter. It was agreed that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Mr Budgen, would have authority to make such contribution from the Lothingland level reserves as they thought appropriate. The question was raised as to whether other levels might be required to contribute towards the cost of this scheme and it was agreed that this would not be appropriate.

### **22.7.2 Langley Double Pump**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting Messrs Basey-Fisher and Caston had considered further the cost of the proposed scheme for the replacement of the second pump at Langley and the installation of an automatic weed screen cleaner. The estimated cost of the works had been £432,000.00 of which the Board would have to contribute £159,500.00 plus any contingencies. They had considered this to be a too high a price for the Board to bear taking into account that the second pump was very seldom used. An alternative scheme just for the installation of an automatic weed screen cleaner had been considered but the Clerk had been advised that no grant would be forthcoming for this and the cost to the Board for such a scheme was therefore likely to be £168,000.00. After some discussion it was agreed that the Board should not proceed with these schemes. In order to address the health and safety issue at this pumping station (which has a deep weed screen for clearing) Mr Caston would investigate the possibility of installing two new weed screens some distance from the pumping station which would involve lifting weed probably about a metre which was perceived to be a much lower risk.

### 22.7.3 Askews Pump Scheme

The Clerk reported that the net cost of the scheme to the Board was going to end up just over £100,000.00. He advised that all levels on the Island had combined balances of c £32,700.00 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 disregarding the cost of the scheme. This meant that they could apply part of that balance to the scheme to leave the Board with a borrowing requirement of say £85,000.00. He had obtained quotations the rates available today from the Public Works Loan Board and the cost of a loan of that amount over twenty years (2.10%) would be £5,226.76 per annum, over fifteen years (1.79%) £6,486.60 per annum and over ten years (1.46%) £9,166.54 per annum. It was agreed that the fifteen year loan would be affordable bearing in mind that the existing loans for the culvert and the road (for which repayments were currently being made at the rate of £8,762.00 per annum) would be repaid in full by the end of June 2018. The question arose as to whether this money should be borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board or the money applied from the Board's general reserves with the Island levels paying interest to the other levels at a rate equivalent to the PWLB rate. It was agreed that fixing the interest now at the rate that would be charged by the Public Works Loan Board left the other levels at a risk or receiving less by way of interest in later years than they would receive if the money were in the bank. After some debate it was agreed that £85,000.00 should be borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board and repaid over a period of fifteen years. The Clerk was directed to seek the necessary approvals and to conclude the loan.

### 22.7.4 Haddiscoe Island Road

The Board considered the email received from Michael Falcon offering to transfer the new concrete road on Haddiscoe Island to the Board. This had been acquired by BAM Nuttall Limited on behalf of the Broadland Flood Alleviation Project from landowners when that road was built. Nuttall have responsibility for its maintenance up to 2021. Board members were initially opposed to taking over the road but on reflection decided that they should give the matter further consideration and would do so before the next meeting and the Clerk should tell Mr Falcon that he could expect a considered reply after that. It was recognised that if the Board owns the road it may facilitate future maintenance.

### 22.7.5 Capital Schemes Generally

The Clerk reported that Mr Alan Ibbotson, who had hitherto helped the Board in carrying out project appraisal work for Capital Schemes and obtaining grant funding, was retiring. The Clerk had reviewed the possible options for obtaining the engineering advice needed in the future to ensure equipment is properly and economically maintained and replaced as appropriate. He also expressed his concern that the capital replacement programme should be more firmly based on engineering need. He said that he had approached the Boards within the Water Management Alliance and had had a meeting with their engineer Giles Bloomfield (formerly of the Environment Agency) and they had indicated a willingness to assist the Board with this work. The Clerk advised that he considered these were the best people to do the work as they were familiar with the relevant personnel at the Agency and the procedures to be followed. This would also enable the Board to form closer links with the Water Management Alliance to

mutual advantage. He explained briefly that a Public Sector Cooperation Agreement would be required to take this forward to provide the framework under which two boards could work together to provide mutual support. The Board were content with the Clerk's proposal and authorised him to take this further with WMA.

## **22.8 Arrears**

The Clerk reported on the outstanding arrears up to the end of 2016/17 financial year which were as follows:-

Assessment	15/011/040	Ms P Cook	£61.00
	14/053/012	Mr Burrage	£361.03
	19/307/009	Gillingham Estate and Farms	£50.16
	20/31/078	Mr and Mrs B C Macro	£7.50
	22/0021	Winter Flora Limited	£7.14
	22/0367	Mr and Mrs P Murton	£46.55

The Clerk reported on the action he was taking. He was mainly concerned about the outstanding assessment 14/053/012. He had been promised a cheque last week but it had not been forthcoming. The Clerk was authorised to take proceedings if this was not received very shortly.

## **22.9 ADA Eastern Branch Meeting**

The Clerk reported that there was a branch meeting scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017. It was noted also that there was a suggestion from ADA central office that it would be beneficial to hold a general meeting to provide an opportunity to give some publicity to the good work being undertaken by IDBs in the area. Steps were being taken to arrange this and Board members would be advised of the date when available. He encouraged Board members to support the meeting.

## **22.10 Any Other Business**

### **22.10.1**

Mr Fiennes queried whether it was appropriate that the owner of the property adjoining the Norton pump should have a right of access between the weed screen and the pump building. It was agreed that this was not appropriate and that a better fence with a locked gate should be erected to prevent this.

### **22.10.2**

Mr Watson queried whether the Clerk had been approached about a collapsed culvert by the level crossing at Blind Man's Gate at Barnby. The supposition was that this serves the landspring which is main river so that the culvert is the responsibility of the Environment Agency to repair.

22.10.3

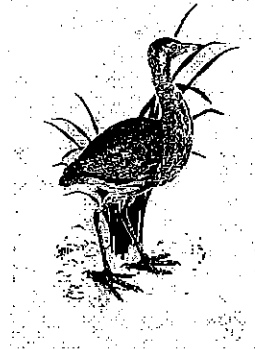
It was agreed that the next meeting of the Board would be on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 2 o'clock.

# Broads Drainage

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By email only

20<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Dear Mr Blower,

## Re: Caldecott Pumping Station

As you know I have visited this pumping station on several occasions dating back to 2009. In 2009 I raised many Health and Safety issues few of which have been resolved.

The Board had documentary title to this mill and the surrounding land which was relinquished in 2010 on the proviso that the Board was able to use the mill for our equipment and have unrestricted access to it. Mrs Roberts agreed to keep the mill clean and tidy and in a wind and water tight condition (Letter 13.10.10).

In 2010 I raised many Health and Safety issues including the leaking roof, filthy mill interior and debris around the mill.

Last year (04.02.16) I reported that these issues had not been dealt with and that the roof had blown off completely. The door to the mill was wide open with the lock rusted off.

Mr Roberts' response to a letter from you (01.03.16) gave the impression that he had fitted "a small wooden building over the controls with a waterproof roof structure" and that "the door was being repaired" This addressed the two main issues.

On 26.01.17 I tried to arrange an appointment to meet Mr Roberts (Pump Attendant) on site in order to carry out my annual inspection. After no response to my emails to Mr Roberts I eventually got a reply from Mrs Roberts. I provided seven dates in February when I could meet. I had no response. Eventually I asked if Mrs Lovegrove could make the appointment. This was duly made for 10.03.17. I tried to make the site visit but the gate to Marsh Lane was padlocked. I invoiced the Board for this abortive visit.

I then provided a further eight dates when I could visit. Mr Roberts appointed Mrs Roberts as the Pump Attendant and I eventually made a site visit on 29.03.17 with Mrs Roberts.

Most Health and Safety issues remain unchanged over seven years. Furthermore the appointment of Mrs Roberts as Pump Attendant with no understanding of the basic functioning of a station has increased the risks present here. She was unable to tell me what the winter/ summer levels were, had a worrying disregard for the amount of rubbish strewn around the site, did not see the problem in keeping the first aid kit in her car when she walked to the site, and tried to explain how the polythene covering over the control box "had been fixed with that wire". The 'wire' was in fact the Telemetry aerial. The previously mentioned 'roof' over the control box "must have been removed by vandals a few days prior to [my] visit". It is my opinion that the wooden waterproof roof never existed. There are no screw holes or signs of fixing on the wall. When I mentioned the sharp metal etc around the pumping station Mrs Roberts said that this was not IDB land therefore not IDB business. It was not apparent to Mrs Roberts that any infringement of Health and Safety practices, whether on IDB land or their own land was putting others at risk. (The 'wandering' public and subcontractors in particular).

Mrs Roberts has said that she will keep the Board informed regarding the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to repair the mill. To my knowledge this has not happened.

I understand that Mr Roberts appointed his wife as Pump Attendant when the Board would normally appoint. In my view neither Mr nor Mrs Roberts are capable of holding the post of Pump Attendant. Both have been obstructive in communications and said they will take action when photographs show little has changed. There are some excellent Attendants in the area who would carry out their role conscientiously with appropriate regard for Health and Safety issues.

If there was an accident on this site the Health and Safety Executive would be involved and would identify all the issues that I have raised and potentially more.

As Health and Safety Officer it is likely that I would bear some of the responsibility for the poor state of affairs leading to any accident which can lead to heavy fines and potential imprisonment.

I am no longer prepared to continue to take responsibility for Health and Safety arrangements at this site. If this is not possible on a selective basis then I will have to relinquish my role as Health and Safety Officer.

Yours sincerely

Chris Mutton

Health and Safety Officer Waveney Lower Yare and Lothingland IDB

Attached: Photos



I attach photos for illustration:

1. The remains of the roof that blew off in January 2016. The tin is still in a heap beside the mill presenting a hazard for the Attendant, the public and sub contractors.
2. Timber from the mill lying in the reeds. This is a hazard for BESL who mow the bank and folding at least once a year.
3. Discarded fencing and fence wire will soon be hidden by long grass presenting a trip and entrapment hazard.
4. Old metal strap and roof sheets buried in the grass. I have photos of this same metal strap taken in 2009.
5. This lock was put on after my visit 04.02.16. It is not fit for purpose being badly fitted and very weak. Access could be easily gained with a potential for electric shock and vandalism.
6. Close up of the door hasp and staple
7. The door was being held shut with a lump of brick rubble.
8. Sharp pieces of partly buried metal in the grass.
9. Close up of sharp metal
10. Another metal object sticking out of the ground. A particular hazard for the bank cutting team.
11. Weed screen has not been cleared for some time
12. A piece of black polythene had been put over the control panel at some time but was now hanging off.
- 13/14. Water is still penetrating the building because there is no roof. The IDB controls have been exposed to the elements for more than a year. The water that has collected in the mill has become so deep as to require timber walk boards to be laid on the floor. These are placed on top of the rubber safety matting put down in 2010 by the IDB to withstand 410v from the cabinet. Obviously the safety mat will not provide protection against electric shock if it is under water.
- 15/16. Bird nesting material has still not been cleared. This was first reported in 2009. Mrs Roberts said that it was new material brought in this year. This is not the case. Photos show that it is the same as that in 2009. Regardless of its vintage it continues to be a fire and health hazard.

There has been some attempt to improve the mill; the upper window and one of the doors have been blocked off. Some nesting material has been cleared and some random items have been removed.

Nonetheless the pumping station is well below a safe and healthy standard.