

**MINUTES OF THE 12<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE WAVENEY LOWER YARE & LOTHINGLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2012 AT 2 O'CLOCK AT HADDISCOE VILLAGE HALL**

**Present:**

- Mr B G Collen (Chairman)**
- Mr P Cargill (Vice Chairman)**
- Mr W Slater**
- Mr J Brown**
- Mr H Carrie**
- Mr R Beevor**
- Mr R Basey-Fisher**
- Mr M Caston**
- Mr M Gooch**
- Mr T Lewis (South Norfolk District Council)**
- Mr J Savage (South Norfolk District Council)**
- Mr Marsden (Gt Yarmouth Borough Council)**
- Mr J Pettman (Broadland District Council)**

**In attendance:** **Mr B J S Blower (Clerk)**

**Apologies:**

- Mr C Mutton**
- Mr N Dodd**
- Mr D Watson**
- Mr R Cundy**
- Miss R Hipperson**
- Mr D Burroughs**
- Mrs L Neal**
- Mrs K Billig**
- Mr M Pitchers**

### **12.1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012 having been circulated were approved as a true record. Mr Collen was authorised to sign them.

### **12.2 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **12.3 Approval of Accounts**

Copies of the Accounts for the Board for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 had been circulated with the draft Annual Return as completed by the Internal Auditor with a summary of the comparison between estimated and actual expenditure for each level. Board members had considered the figures and the Accounts were approved.

### **12.4 Annual Return for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012**

The Board considered the Annual Return and in particular the Annual Governance Statement in Section 2 and the Chairman and Clerk were authorised to sign these on behalf of the Board.

### **12.5 The Internal Auditor's Report**

The Internal Auditor's Report had been circulated and the Clerk drew the Board's attention in particular to the conclusion in his Report and the two



recommendations made. The Board considered the first recommendation in some detail in view of the fact that quotations may not always be obtained for works. Councillors were concerned to ensure that an appropriate process was adopted to ensure best value even where it was not practical to obtain the requisite number of quotations. It was stressed that for works carried out on individual levels it was invariably in the interests of the Surveyors who were in the most part rate payers themselves, to ensure best possible value was achieved. There were more difficulties with pump repairs because the only contractor who could practically deal with pump breakdowns was D.C. Hunt Engineers in Acle. It was suggested that the Financial Regulations should be reviewed in order to make it clear why tenders were not always obtained.

As to the Internal Auditor's second recommendation it was agreed that the Fixed Asset Register should be compiled in a single document in accordance with that recommendation.

### **12.6 Capital Scheme**

The Clerk reported that the Norton automatic weedscreen cleaner had been installed but not yet commissioned but that this was expected shortly following completion of the necessary security fencing.

It was noted that the Environment Agency arrangements for approval of grant aid had been completely changed and consequent upon this it was going to be very much more difficult to be sure of obtaining grant aid. The Clerk had been advised that given the nature of the properties protected by the North Cove pump it was unlikely that a Scheme would obtain approval for the replacement of the North Cove pump because it would be too expensive. It had been suggested that instead of this it may be appropriate to carry out a project appraisal report in to the feasibility of making a connecting pipe between the North Cove and Barnby levels so that in the event of a North Cove pump failure there might be a possibility of joining the two. It was agreed that such a proposal should be put in to the capital programme going to the Environment Agency and that a project appraisal report into this may be prepared so long as those directly involved on the affected levels had no objection.

### **12.7 Asset Register**

The Board reviewed the Asset Register which had been circulated with the Agenda. Concern was expressed at whether the Board held sufficient reserves to replace assets in the event of failure. The Clerk outlined the Board's policy towards replacement which was to build up a balance if it was anticipated that capital works may be required to enable any Scheme to be started but for the Board to expect to have to borrow money from Public Works Loan Board to cover the net cost of any Scheme which was to be implemented. It was noted that all but two of the pumps had been replaced over the past twelve to fifteen years. The Asset Register was approved.

### **12.8 Health and Safety Report**

In the absence of the Health and Safety Officer the Clerk read the Health and Safety Officer's Report. It was noted that new structures at Worlingham, Gillingham, Barnby (Spratts) and Norton were due to be inspected in July. Other minor works such as signage improvements would be carried out during the summer. There had been no serious occurrences and there had been no reported near misses. Order books have been issued to all Surveyors which stipulate that

*B. G. Gille*

all sub-contractors are to be responsible for producing their own method statements and risk assessments.

### **12.9 Pump Inspection Meeting**

10<sup>th</sup> July was provisionally agreed for a visit to a pump and it was hoped that as many Councillors as possible would attend to have an opportunity to inspect the operation of one of the Board's pumps.

### **12.10 Election**

It was noted that an election was due to be held in September this year and all Board members present were willing to stand again and there had been no notifications of anybody wishing to resign their place on the Board.

### **12.11 Any other business**

12.11.1 Biodiversity Action Plan. Mr Gooch indicated that Suffolk Wildlife Trust would like to run a Workshop to give guidance to Surveyors and Board members as to how work practices may be adapted to ensure that BAP policies are being followed. The Chairman indicated that when this had previously been suggested there had been little enthusiasm for it and that it was probably more appropriate for landowners to be involved with this than for the Board. Nevertheless Suffolk Wildlife Trust would put forward a programme for such a meeting which could possibly be held in the Autumn and the Clerk would circulate this to Board members and Surveyors to gauge interest at the time.

12.11.2 Hardley Mill. Mr Basey-Fisher reported on a meeting between himself, Mr Collen, Mr Caston and the Clerk which had been convened to consider an application made in respect of Hardley Mill. Mr Basey-Fisher reminded the Board that the Board owns the freehold interest in Hardley Mill which is let on a long Lease to Norfolk County Council who in turn have sub-let to Mr Grix who has invested a lot of money in restoring the Mill. Mr Grix now wishes to give up his Lease and for a new Lease to be granted to Hardley Windmill Trust Limited a company which has been formed for the purpose of taking the Lease and running the Mill. Norfolk County Council have taken the opportunity to ask if the Board would be prepared to grant a new Lease direct to the new company thereby terminating the Head Lease. It was agreed that the Board would permit the Sub-Lease to be surrendered and that Norfolk County Council would be permitted to grant a new Lease to the Company but the Board would not accept a surrender of the Norfolk County Council Lease.

12.11.3 Amalgamations. There was discussion on possible amalgamations between levels and it was agreed that the Clerk should provide to the Board some illustration as to what the likely effect would be of an amalgamation between such levels as he thought appropriate and an example of one or two amalgamations would be sufficient for the Board to make a decision as to whether to take this forward. The Clerk was asked whether this would substantially reduce overheads but he thought that it was likely that any saving would be marginal.

12.11.4 It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2013 at 2 o'clock at Haddiscoe Village Hall.

