

Minutes of the Meeting of the East Harling Internal Drainage Board held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at The Pines, 50 Connaught Road, Attleborough, Norfolk at 11.00am.

**Present:**    **Mr D Stammers (Chairman)**            **Mr C D Wright (CEO and Clerk)**  
                  **Mr A Bingham (Engineer)**                **Mr H Beevor**  
                  **Mr I Walker**                                        **Mr A Southgate**  
                  **Mr A Thornton**                                   **Mr P Drake**  
                  **Mr S Askew**  
                  **Mrs E Jolly (District Councillor)**

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Lee, Mr J Cantrill and Mr J Nelstrop
2. It was proposed by Mr Drake and seconded by Mr Walker that the Minutes of the meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012 be approved.
3. **Matters arising**

#### **Developments within the Board**

- a) Mr Wright reported that Taylor Wimpey will be seeking consent to discharge into the Board area and the Board will be seeking a commuted sum payment from them. Mr Bingham said that there would be no commuted sum payment from the Development in Leys Lane Attleborough as the site was outside the Board area and did not affect the drainage within the Board.

Mr Bingham said that if the land at New Road which was currently being proposed for planning, was approved then a commuted sum payment would be discussed with the developers.

In respect of the planning application for land at Camp Farm, Mr Bingham confirmed he had written objecting to the application to Norfolk County Council the relevant authority in view of the lack of information for drainage purposes. Breckland District Council are aware of the situation in respect of this application.

#### **Norfolk Water Management Partnership**

- b) Mr Wright said that he had been attending meetings throughout the year in respect of the Norfolk Water Management Partnership and Norfolk County Council had now decided to seek to expand the role of IDBs in Norfolk in order to assist Norfolk County Council as the Local Lead Flood Authority. Norfolk County Council was seeking an agreement in principle from the IDBs by the end of March 2013 so that IDBs would cover all of Norfolk (either informally through their uplands / catchments or by extending their statutory areas). IDBs would help develop and sign up to Norfolk County Council's

policies strategies and performance standards. For this, Norfolk County Council would ensure that adequate funding would be available for appropriate works. IDBs and Norfolk County Council will work with the Districts to put in place appropriate bye-laws. IDBs would then take on responsibility either as agent or as principal for consenting and carrying out other roles for Norfolk County Council as the Local Lead Flood Authority. Mr Wright expressed concerns that at the moment there was not enough detail as to how Boards would drive their authority to deal with the consenting and other work required of them and where the funding would come from. It was also not known how much work would be required. However, he pointed out that from the Board's point of view to have additional responsibilities over a wider area could ensure the long term future of the Board as an independent Drainage Board.

After discussion and questions the Board agreed that in principle it would be in the Board's interest to proceed further with this but this would be subject to the details and it was suggested that the Board should put forward proposals to Norfolk County Council to move this forward. Mr Wright said that he will be attending the next meeting on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> February at the Norfolk showground and putting forward the Board's view to see where the matter led. The principle was proposed by Mr Southgate and seconded by Mr Beevor and carried unanimously.

#### **Enmainment of the River Thet**

- c) As part of the discussion, the emmainment of the River Thet was discussed. It is quite clear that the Environment Agency do not want any responsibility for working on the Thet and look at the Thet in its current state as a flood defence rather than as an active water course. The Board discussed the proposal to survey the Thet and Mr Bingham produced cost estimates. It was proposed by Mr Beevor and seconded by Mr Thornton and carried unanimously that the survey be completed so that the Board would know if it took over responsibility for the Thet what the liabilities were likely to be and the costs involved. However it was noted that bringing the Thet back into condition could be a long term project and would never be something that the Board could achieve as a quick fix.

#### **4. Conservation Issues**

Mr Wright explained to the Board the contradictions between conservation against water management and gave the example that with SUDS the purpose of installing them could be defeated by the need for subsequent conservation of species that took over the SUDS area. It was agreed that detail of water vole habitats could be included on the Board's website when the new website was fully up and running.

#### **5. Board Member Reports**

##### **Peter Drake**

Mr Hall is complaining of rushes in the water course up to Caston and also in a piece in Breckles. There has been a lot of tree growth on both sides. It may also be necessary for Simon O'Malley to do some work on Cranberry Rough.

**Ian Walker**

The stream west of Bestrope flyover is bad otherwise his area is alright.

**Steven Askew**

All appears ok within his area although with the water levels high, this may be only an impression but the flows are flowing well.

**Roger Thornton**

Flows have been free despite the excessive rain and snow fall and there are no problems in his area.

**Hugh Beevor**

Basically, there are no problems. The only problem is at the end of the school driveway but this is really just due to volume.

**Alan Southgate**

All is ok in his area as Simon O'Malley went through the streams last summer.

**Philip Lee**

Mr Wright reported that there are some pieces in his area which need attention and Mr Bingham will look at these.

**Dudley Stammers**

All is ok except for the piece which was intended to be done last year which hopefully will be done this year if the rains allow.

**Eileen Jolly**

There has been some flooding before you get to Roudham Hall and Mr Bingham said that he would investigate this.

**6. Election of Officers**

- 1) Chairman - Mr D Stammers, proposed by Mr S Askew and seconded by Mr A Southgate and carried unanimously.
- 2) Vice Chairman - Mr A Southgate, proposed by Mr P Drake and seconded by Mr I Walker and carried unanimously.

**7. Approval of Payment of Accounts**

- 1) The Clerk circulated the Accounts for the Board to consider and raise appropriate questions. After due consideration it was proposed by Mr Thornton and seconded by Mr Walker that the payment of accounts be approved and this was carried unanimously.
- 2) It was proposed by Mr Beevor and seconded by Mr Walker that the write off of small accounts under £5.00 be approved and this was approved unanimously.

**8. Financial Position of the Board**

The Clerk gave a general overview of the current position of the Board and how the Accounts would stand at the end of the current financial year. He also gave an overview of the financial position for the next year and the budget figures. He said that he had a request from Pent Limited to have a reduction in their drainage rates as they were not occupying their buildings and it was proposed by Mr Drake and seconded by Mr Walker and carried unanimously that they should pay their drainage rates in full. As a result, the Board noted the position of the finances.

#### **9. Wages & Salaries**

- 1) After a discussion it was proposed by Mr Beevor and seconded by Mr Askew that Mr O'Malley be awarded a 3% increase and this was carried unanimously.
- 2) In the absence of Mr Wright it was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Southgate that his salary be increased by 3%.
- 3) In the absence of Mr Bingham it was proposed that his charging rate be increased by 3% and this was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Southgate and carried unanimously.
- 4) It was proposed by Mr Drake and seconded by Mr Southgate that the Chairman's expenses be increased by 3% and this carried unanimously.

#### **10. Fixing the Rate**

After discussion and review of the budget for 2013/14 it was proposed by Mr Beevor and seconded by Mr Drake and carried unanimously that the rates be increased by one penny in the pound to twelve pence.

#### **11. Advertising the Rate**

It was proposed by Mr Southgate and seconded by Mr Walker that the rate be advertised and this was carried unanimously. It was also proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Thornton that the special levy be raised on Breckland Council and this was carried unanimously.

#### **12. Governance**

The Clerk reported on governance issues and the fact that there were no potential liabilities to the Board and no potential litigation. He reported that Internal Audit had not found any issues to raise before the Board and the Board had seen all details of accounts paid. It was proposed by Mr Southgate and seconded by Mr Beevor that the annual statement of governance be approved.

#### **13. Any other Business**

- 1) The Clerk warned the Board that if the Board's responsibilities expanded then the accounts and rating would need to be computerised.
- 2) Mr Bingham reported that the website had been transferred over to the new web provider which would mean that the Board could update itself for all future purposes.

- 3) A query had been raised by Mr Richard Adcock about flooding in Flowers Lane. This is not in the Board area and the Board has no responsibility at present for that piece of stream.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting.