

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the East Harling Internal Drainage Board held on the 31st January, 2019 at The Pines, 50 Connaught Road, Attleborough, Norfolk at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Mr T Jolly (stand-in chairman)
Mr C D Wright (CEO and Clerk)
Mr A Bingham (Board Engineer)
Mr S Askew
Mr I Walker
Mr P Lee
Mr P Hall
Mr A Thornton
Mr J Williams – Attleborough Town Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Mr D Stammers Mr A Southgate Mr H Beevor and Mr T Charles

2. Minutes of Meeting of the 25th May 2018

The minutes of the meeting of the 25th May, 2018 having been previously circulated were approved and signed by the Chairman

3. Matters Arising

A. Attleborough Southern Urban Extension

Mr Bingham updated the meeting saying that meetings had been held with Ptarmigan, Norfolk County Council and Attleborough Town Council concerning the proposed development. Talks are continuing with Attleborough Town Council in respect of the management of the SUDS systems on site. Some of the existing water courses will be within the Internal Drainage Board's area whereas some will not. However, Attleborough Town Council are considering taking over the management of the green spaces and working together with the Drainage Board on the management of the water courses. The financing of this would come from a combination of commuted sum payments and annual payments. It was agreed that John Williams would be copied in with notices of meetings.

B. Camp Farm Bridgham

Mr Bingham reported that there is an anaerobic digester development which was contained within the site. There will be a decision on the 28th February, 2019 on discharge of the conditions.

C. Developments within the Board

There is a development at Hillsend Lane Attleborough of five houses. The Board had put in an objection but the development had been passed anyway. There is a condition that full drainage details will have to be delivered. The Taylor Wimpey site has a direct discharge

into the Board area. The Tingdene Development is not proceeding at the moment.

D. Development Charges

It was agreed that the rate of charge remain the same for the current year.

E. Maintenance of the River Thet

This is in hand this week with Simon O'Malley, the cost will be paid for by the Environment Agency under the PSCA.

F. Water Management Partnership

The Clerk said that he will attend meetings as and when they are held but no meetings had been held over the last year.

G. IDB By Laws

A final version was produced for approval and it was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Thornton that they be approved and this was passed unanimously.

H. CamEO Partnership

Mr Bingham has been attending meetings. This is of the Little Ouse Thetford Partnership and is led by Anglian Water. There is work taking place on invasive species. Mr Jolly raised the question as to whether the Board should consider the river to be a public asset. If so, should the Board consider how access can be made for the public to walk safely by the River Thet. It was agreed that Mr Askew will be the contact with Breckland Council.

I. GIS Database

Mr Bingham said this is proving more difficult than at first thought but he was hoping to progress this. The website had been hacked and destroyed and a new website was being built.

4. Conservation Issues

All Drainage Board work has been done in accordance with the Policy Statement and carried out environmentally sensitively.

5. Board Member Reports

Mr Jolly reported there were no problems in his area.

Mr P Hall said no problems reported in his area.

Mr S Askew said no problems reported in his area.

Mr I Walker reported that there is a tree across the weir downstream of Baconsthorpe Bridge and this will be looked into.

Mr A Southgate had forwarded a report saying the problems on his land were being addressed.

Mr P Lee reported that most of the problems in his area were through woodland where trees in the river were causing some obstruction. He was concerned with the amount of reed which was growing and reported that the River level is the lowest for years. A rate payer had contacted him with concerns and he had had a look but the stream was not a Board maintained stream. He could see what was trying to be achieved. One of the parties had had advice from National Rivers Trust. A call had been received from James Waters at the Environment Agency and it had been confirmed that it was not a Board maintained stream. It was agreed that a note should go out to ratepayers saying that it is against by-laws to work on Board maintained streams and consent is needed for this.

Mr Bingham said that work was taking place around Harling Mill and he would have a look.

Mr Thornton reported that in his area there are lots of woods that join the river. Mr O'Malley is going through there now.

Mr Beevor had reported that there were no problems within his area.

Mr D Stammers reported that in respect of Mr Lewin this had been looked at with Mr Bingham and himself. Mr O'Malley had been through and done some clearance. Mr Lewin said that he would pay his outstanding rates within the next month.

6. Election of Officers

- a) It was proposed by Mr Askew and seconded by Mr Walker that Mr Dudley Stammers be chairman and this was carried unanimously.
- b) It was proposed by Mr Askew and seconded by Mr Thornton that Mr Ian Walker be Vice Chairman and this was carried unanimously.

It was agreed that there should be principle that the Chairman should serve for only three years and this was proposed by Mr Thornton and seconded by Mr Hall and carried unanimously.

7. Approval of the Payment of Accounts

The Board members considered the payments made and income received over the last year and considered the position in respect of outstanding rates. After due consideration and discussion, it was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Thornton that the accounts be approved.

8. Write Offs of Rates Under £5

It was proposed by Mr Thornton and seconded by Mr Hall that the accounts less than £5 be written off, a total of £107.27.

The Clerk raised the principle of transfer of small areas adjoining residential dwellings into special levy. It was agreed in principle that if a property comprised a house and one hectare or less then this would be deemed to be garden and would be transferred from general rate into special levy. This was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Lee.

9. Financial Position of the Board

The Clerk reported the current financial position of the Board. It was noted on last years budget income had exceeded expenditure and it was anticipated with the current proposal for sympathetic maintenance within the Board Area that the position would again be that income would exceed expenditure if the rates were maintained at their current level. The Board members had received details of the accounts to date and budges for the coming year. The accounts are healthy at the present time and after discussion there were no further questions raised.

10. Wages and Salaries

Mr Bingham outlined his position having moved from Bingham Hall Associates to his own company and indicated that he would be pleased to continue as the Board Engineer. Mr Bingham and Mr Wright left the room. On their return, Mr Jolly said that the Board were appreciative of the efforts of both Mr Bingham, Mr Wright and the Chairman. It was agreed that Mr Wright would continue as Clerk and CEO for the next year. It was agreed that he should receive a 2% increase in salary. Mr Bingham will also continue and his remuneration remain as at present. It was agreed that Mr Stammers should receive the sum of £630 for Chairman's Expenses.

11. Fixing of the Rate

The financial position of the Board was discussed going forward and it was proposed by Mr Lee and seconded by Mr Walker that the rate for the coming year be fixed at 10 pence in the pound and this was carried unanimously.

12. Advertising of the Rate and Service of the Special Levy

It was proposed by Mr Thornton and seconded by Mr Hall that the special levy be served on Breckland Council and it was proposed by Mr Askew and seconded by Mr Lee that the rate be advertised.

13. Any Other Business

(a) Mr Williams asked for a copy of the original By Laws for the Attleborough Heritage Group.

- (b) Mr Lee said if the Drainage Board was to be more in the public eye, should we seek representation from the Business community. It was agreed that the Board would consider a representative from the local Chamber of Trade and also on the conservation side from Norfolk Wildlife Trust. This was proposed by Mr Lee and seconded by Mr Hall.
- (c) The Board had received a letter from Mr Pilkington and Mr Bingham said he was dealing with it.
- (d) Audit Report – the only issue on the audit was the fact that the annual statement of governance and approval of accounts were approved in the wrong order and this will not happen in the coming year.
- (e) On the question of non-payment of rates by Mr Watling, Mr Walker said that it may be that they are not paying the rates because of the culvert but this is the responsibility of Norfolk County Council.
- (f) The AGM was arranged for the 6th February, 2020.
- (g) There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting.