

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the East Harling Internal Drainage Board held on the 24th January 2024 held at The Conference Room Breckland Lodge Attleborough at 10.30 a.m.

Present: **Mr T Jolly (Chairman)**
 Mr C D Wright (CEO and Clerk)
 Mr A Bingham (Board Engineer)
 Mr T Beevor
 Mr P Hall
 Mr A Thornton
 Mr I Walker
 Mr S Southgate
 Mr N Doig
 Mr D Stammers
 Mr A Westby (Attleborough Town Council)

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence received from Mr S Askew and Ms A Kester (the representative of the Quidenham Estate). There were no Declarations of Interest.

2. Minutes of Meeting of the 26th June 2023

The minutes of the meeting of the 26th June 2023 having been previously circulated were approved and signed by the Chairman, proposed by I Walker and seconded by T Beevor and carried unanimously.

3. Matters Arising

A. Developments within the Board

Attleborough Southern Urban Expansion.

Mr Bingham reported that this had gone quiet for the moment. The developers of the first stage had applied for Board approval for their drainage plans, but this only related to the site they are developing (the initial 1199 dwellings). Both the Board and Norfolk County Council LLFA were asking for a drainage strategy to be agreed for the whole site and the developer's agent had not responded to this request. Currently the Board and NCC have not withdrawn their objection to the development.

Land off Hargham Road Attleborough – Lovells.

Mr Bingham said he was putting together Heads of Terms for site 1 for the Developer to agree so an agreement could be entered into, and a commuted sum paid. Site 2 is not as far progressed but will also require a Deed of Consent and payment of a commuted sum.

Land off Carvers Lane Attleborough – Places for People.

Agreement in principle has been agreed with the Highways Agency for the grant of an Easement to the Board to maintain the watercourse within the highway boundary. This is in the hands of the lawyers to agree and complete. Mr Bingham is discussing Heads of Terms with the Developer to move this part forward.

Land off Norwich Road Attleborough.

Heads of terms have been issued to the Developer and agreed. Now in the hands of the lawyers to agree the Deed of Consent. Mr Bingham explained the situation in respect of the flooding on the 23rd October 2023. The flooding had all taken place on the south side of Norwich Road Attleborough which is outside the Board area. The Board area is north of Norwich Rd. Flooding in this area has occurred before and Mr Bingham showed on screen the route of the stream before it reaches Norwich Road and the bottlenecks which cause the stream to back up and flood. Hill, the Developers had put in a culvert on the Board stream without our consent and this has been removed as a result of our request to do so. Mr Bingham said in his opinion the culvert would not have been a substantial cause of the flooding if at all, as the Hill site had not flooded except where it was supposed to do so. The Board had received a letter from Keoghs, a firm of solicitors instructed by an insurer of one of the flooded properties requesting information from the Board, which will be provided to them. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that the Board had the greatest sympathy with those flooded and would give its co-operation and expertise to assist in trying to resolve future flooding issues.

Taylor Wimpey London Road Attleborough.

They have not entered into a Deed of Consent and paid their commuted sum and this is now in the hands of lawyers.

B. Weir at Old Buckenham

Mr Bingham set out the position again. After discussion it was decided that the Board's position remained unchanged and Mr Bingham would reply to the various parties accordingly.

C. Development Charges

It was agreed to fix the Board's charges in line with the charges made by the Water Management Alliance. This was proposed by D Stammers and seconded by N Doig and carried unanimously.

D. Norfolk Water Management Partnership

There have been no meetings this year but the Clerk will attend any called in the next year.

F. CAMEO Partnership

Mr Bingham is involved with a sub group, The Little Ouse and Thetford Partnership (LOTP). Nothing has been heard in the last year.

E. GIS Database

Mr Bingham explained that WMA required information on ownership parcels from DEFRA. To obtain this the Board had to have a Data Sharing Agreement with DEFRA (RPA) which also required the Board to have a Data Protection Policy. All documentation has been provided to the RPA. DEFRA had now agreed to send the information through. (subsequent to the meeting the Data Sharing Agreement was

approved and data has now been downloaded and forwarded to WMA).

F Maintenance of the Thet.

T Beevor said that our contractors had carried out their work in his area in an environmentally sensitive way and that he was pleased with the results.

4. Conservation Issues

All Drainage Board work has been done in accordance with the Policy Statement and carried out environmentally sensitively. Mr Bingham reported that there have been no issues in the last year. Mr Bingham had met with T Beevor on site in Wilby to discuss the possibility of putting in some meanders (re-wilding) on a stretch of watercourse which had been artificially straightened in the war. Natural England had also been enthusiastic on this and said they would put in money to do so. There is also the possibility of obtaining some Developer money for carbon offsetting, and through BNG credits. The Board agreed that in principle this was something they wished to pursue.

5. Board Member Reports

Mr Stammers reported no problems so far as he was aware. Mr Jolly had spoken to Mr Lewin and anything arising out of that needs to be looked at.

Mr Southgate reported no problems other than the odd tree to remove.

Mr Jolly reported no problems in his area.

Mr Beevor said that there were some trees down as a result of the recent storm which Simon O'Malley would deal with but otherwise no problems.

Mr P Hall was unaware of any problems.

Mr Doig reported that work was needed near Overa Cottages and he would send a pin to Simon O'Malley.

Mr I Walker reported that most of his area was fine, but there were two trees down south of the Ellingham Road which needed still to be dealt with. He also said there was a stretch between his area and Mr Southgate's area which neither of them covered and Mr Bingham said he would walk this part to see if works were required.

Mr Thornton reported no problems.

6. Election of Officers

- a) It was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Southgate that Mr Tim Jolly be chairman and this was carried unanimously.

- b) It was proposed by Mr Southgate and seconded by Mr Hall that Mr Tom Beevor be Vice Chairman, and this was 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 Doig and seconded by Mr Walker that the accounts be approved, and this was carried unanimously.

8. Write Offs of Rates Under £5

It was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Southgate that the accounts less than £5 be written off and this was carried unanimously.

9. Financial Position of the Board

The Clerk reported the current financial position of the Board. The Board members had received details of the accounts to date and budgets for the coming year. There is a deficit predicted for the current year end, but this can come out of commuted sum reserves. The accounts are healthy at the present time and after discussion there were no further questions raised. It was agreed that extra maintenance could be carried out and would be funded from the commuted sum payments.

10. Wages and Salaries

It was proposed by Mr Jolly and seconded by Mr Beevor that both the Clerk should receive 7.5% increase and this was carried unanimously.

11. Fixing of the Rate

The financial position of the Board was discussed going forward and it was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Stammers 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 Hall and seconded by Mr Beevor that the special levy be served on Breckland Council, and it was proposed by Mr Walker and seconded by Mr Doig that the rate be advertised and both proposals were carried unanimously.

13. Any Other Business

- (a) Mr Bingham asked the Board to retrospectively approve the Data Protection and Sharing Policy. Mr Walker proposed, and Mr Beevor seconded approval, and this was carried unanimously.
- (b) The next AGM was arranged for the 23rd January 2025 , to be held in the Conference Room at Breckland Lodge Attleborough.
- (c) There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 1.15pm.